DECEMBER 31, 1935 15c

New Masses

A Report from Germany

The Underground Speaks

By JOHN L. SPIVAK

John Reed and the Old Masses by GRANVILLE HIC

Rain in Virginia *A Short Story* by I[illegible] G

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Are Women HAPPIER in the U. S. S. R.

?

Tatiana Tchernavin says NO

Mme. Tchernavin, author of "Escape from the Soviets," daughter of a scientist, spent several years in the Soviet Union. Her book provoked a violent controversy when it came out.

Anna Louise Strong says YES

Anna Louise Strong is the editor of "Moscow Daily News" and author of "I Change Worlds," a story of her transition from bourgeois America to Soviet Russia. She is internationally known as both a writer and speaker.

DEBATE

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new Masses

DECEMBER 31, 1935

The Townsend Boom

IN THE last few years, the West has proven a fertile ground for the growth of panaceas promising the end of the depression and the solution for capitalist crisis. The Epic Plan last year gained mass support in California and other Coast states and still has a large following. At one time, the Utopians claimed some hundreds of thousands of converts. Now the Townsend Plan estimates over six million followers and sympathizers in the United States. Supporters in Battle Creek, Michigan have just elected a Republican candidate pledged to push the Townsend program in Congress. The Plan is simple enough—it would grant a pension of $200 a month to all citizens over sixty, the money to be spent on commodity goods within one month. The recipients would thus be taken out of industry, giving more jobs to the youth who would, moreover, not have to support parents and relatives. The increased buying power from pension benefits would speed production; industry would gain larger markets; the depression would end and prosperity arrive for all time. It is in these terms that the Townsendites see the future. But though their idea of old-age pensions is a good one, certainly it is unrealistic to dream that the crisis of world capitalism, on which American economy is dependent, can be cured merely by a pension system.

"THE U. S. ARMY GETS ITS ORDERS" *Russell T. Lim*

THE Townsend Plan oversimplifies the economic scene and the problem of social security. It fails to take into account the complicated rivalries which are the basis of all monopoly capitalism. To finance old-age benefits by a two-percent national sales tax would defeat the announced purpose of the Plan—workers, members of the petty bourgeoisie, indigent farmers will bear the burden of old-age relief which should be borne by the recipients of large incomes, by corporations making huge profits, by owners of huge fortunes. And social security means much more than providing security for the aged: sick and death insurance, unemployment and maternity insurance, the abolition of child labor and the relief of poor farmers are even more pressing problems for just those categories that would benefit by the old-age pension. The Lundeen Bill (H.R. 2827), more comprehensive and practical than the Townsend Plan, would bring old-age pensions similar to those advocated by Dr. Townsend plus other urgent benefits. By limiting the recipients to those who are citizens, the Townsend Plan excludes millions of workers who have spent their strength and life in American industry and helped to create its wealth. The Townsendites have yet to formulate a plan of action. Obviously, as they are the first to point out, the Roosevelt administration with its fake social-security legislation, refuses to push concrete, realistic action. The Republican Party, even more reactionary, dominated completely monopoly capitalists of the m turing trusts and the Liberty I will do no more than make dem promises by which it can expect tract votes in the coming election social security—which includes th age pensions advocated by Dr. end's followers—can only be ob through a national Farmer- Party pledged to a program of re social legislation in the interest working class and its allies.

The League's I

JERSEY CITY police hav changed since Corliss Lamo scribed his treatment at their over a year ago. "It is the r the prison officials to humili

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much as possible and try to down their morale," Lamont And when pickets, organized Trade Union Commission of the e Against War and Fascism and ng representatives of writers, and trade-union groups demon- in support of the sailors strik- ie S.S. Spero because this Nor- n boat was loading scrap iron for ini, the police arrested them, hem in jail over night, hand- nd fingerprinted the men. The ? Blocking traffic. The judge out suspended sentences and a ctimonious words. Yet the fact r shipments had been stopped, r a short time, by workers on st Coast is significant of the influence of the American in its fight against war and . The American League holds rd Congress in Cleveland, Janu- 4 and 5. Support of this Con- the sending of delegates to it s many and as varied groups as e, representing trade-unions, lib- ducational, peace and cultural ations, is concrete and realistic gainst the danger of war and mpts of fascism to gain a foot- America.

Columbia Sweat Shop

last three years have revealed administration of Columbia sity not only tampering with liberties but also running a iop. Since 1932 workers in the halls of Teachers College have heir wages cut 40 percent and een dismissed for activity in the Workers Industrial Union. Stool- s have been used to spy on them, feteria employes charged, and ere also marked men for refus- kowtow to Elizabeth Reed, the halls director. Miss Reed has on the open shop. She has the Red-scare whenever under- orkers dared to file a list of ices. Such are the unanimous s of a faculty-student investigat- mmittee appointed by Dean Wil- Russell. This damaging report of bia's labor policy has elicited ean Russell the statement: "We lways thought that we had a fair cient labor policy. If it appears d modification in the light of areful study, we shall change it; quickly as possible." What a v liberal University considers policy will bear watching.

Defending Ethiopia

A NEW impetus has been given to the strong movement among the Negroes of America for defense of Ethiopia, by the unification of most of the small groups that have been working separately to this end, in a centralized organization known as the United Committees for Defense of Ethiopia. This organization has as its aim the consolidation of Negro pressure against the dismemberment of Ethiopia and protection of her independence. It will work for an extended embargo on war materials, including oil, etc., and on developing a consciousness among the Negroes of the menace of fascism as it applies to Ethiopia and as the strangler of democratic liberties everywhere. The Medical Committee for Defense of Ethiopia, 2384 Seventh Avenue, New York, is the branch of the United Committees that is charged with sending aid to Ethiopia in the form of medical supplies, field hospitals, etc. This Committee is now engaged in a campaign to raise funds for these purposes. The first field hospital has been contracted for and will be shipped early in January. All foes of fascism and all friends of Ethiopia are invited to help.

For A Counter-Olympics

ELATED over their victory at the convention in New York two weeks ago, the pro-Nazis in the Amateur Athletic Union have gone off on an obscene spree of unconcealed devotion to Hitlerism. Steers announces that he may capitalize "anti-Semitism in some quarters" to raise the still-needed Olympic fund. Brundage continues to be sublimely blind to everything that he does not choose to see. The resolution in support of the Berlin Olympics included a distinct mandate to the American Committee to see that the "democratic spirit" of sport be observed in the Games, but Brundage knows what to do with such instructions. During three solid years he has held orders to investigate Nazi sport abuses and he has persistently prevented any public hearing on the issue. For him the matter has been closed a long time since. Meantime, the five Negro athletes who were coerced into signing an endorsement of the Nazi Olympics have been Jim-Crowed out of an A.A.U. track meet in New Orleans. Accused of using funds allotted by the German government, A.A.U. officials promised that the source of every penny would be made public. Now it is announced that resources have been "found" to send over to Garmisch-Partenkirchen a team larger than planned—but demands fail to elicit the list of donors.

UNDER such officers a blight has fallen on amateur sport in America. The forces against the Nazi Olympics have suspended activity at precisely the moment when vigorous action is demanded. Their entire campaign was centered upon the religious grievances against Hitlerism and conspicuously missing from both sides of the controversy was any reference to the basic issue: sport in Germany has been destroyed and militarism substituted; the aggrieved party is organized labor which virtually controlled sport in the Second Reich. The Olympics issue is a labor problem and can be met squarely as a labor problem. It is fantastic to hope that the religious bodies of the United States and other countries will engage in an athletic crusade to avenge or rectify religious abuses in Germany. Only labor has the strength and the moral invective to carry the issue militantly. The resignation of Mahoney and the other anti-Nazi officials has effectually split the A.A.U.. It becomes more manifest with each new Brundage mischief that Mahoney can organize a new federation of American sportsmen built about the nucleus of those mass organizations which adhered to him so stoutly at the convention. They represented more than 90 percent of the rank-and-file athletes in the United States. There would be room in the new federation for the thousands of labor athletic units which the A.A.U. has never chartered.

GIVEN such a structure, its first step could be to proclaim a counter-Olympics in some country to be selected at an international conference of similar bodies from all countries. The revenues implied in international spectacles of this nature can give bargaining power for good as well as for evil. It could be stipulated that the country which wants to enjoy the benefits of the counter-Olympics must be a democratic government in Europe which will guarantee ample facilities (several former Olympic sites are still available) and which will withdraw its own teams from the Nazi Games. It

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would be poetic justice to devote surplus income from the counter-Olympics to the relief of refugees from Nazi terrorism. Teams could be entered by the sports organizations of each country or by surrogate bodies. Certainly Jewish support should be available for such a world-wide anti-Nazi demonstration. And labor sports would come into its own for the first time. A whole complement of athletes could be made up of landless refugees from fascism. There will be further dramatic arguments against the Nazi Olympics in the incidents that must attend the Winter Games at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in February. These preliminaries have never passed in the best of years without some friction. In Nazi Germany this February they may set off an explosion. The Nazi spirit will not take pleasantly to pacifists, internationalists, Jewish athletes, Negroes whose victory is "unthinkable" in an Aryan paradise, and visitors accustomed to free lands. The counter-Olympics should be ready to take over.

Hearst's New Drive

AS THE growing force of the United Front against war and fascism and for the preservation of civil rights gathers strength, Hearst is pressing his assault on the Communists, the Socialists and the liberals whose opposition to the establishment of fascism in the United States is threatening to defeat his own aims. The Hearst papers are calling for the revocation of citizenship rights of M. J. Olgin, editor of The Morning Freiheit, for the suppression of the National Peace Conference, of the Carnegie Fund and other groups whose efforts are directed for peace and against imperialist war. Hearst has begun a campaign of "discovery." His latest "discovery" was blazoned forth in the Sunday American under the head "Communist Plot to Massacre all Foes in United States Bared." What Hearst's master-minds had found to give rise to this lynch-inciting headline was a pamphlet by Olgin entitled "Why Communism?" This is a five-cent pamphlet sold openly in all Workers Bookshops and simply presents the case for Communism. Into this discussion of the Communist position Hearst injected armed insurrections, incitation to rebellion in the army, murders and massacres by revolutionists.

IN SEVERAL other stories "supporting" the main one, the Hearst fascist trend is emphasized. For instance, he is intimating that the National Peace Conference is a subversive organization because it dares attack and discuss the Tydings-McCormick so-called Army and Navy [illegible] which Congressman Maverick has branded as a "brash piece lerist fascism." Presumably Mav[illegible] is just a traitor to his country for da[illegible] ing to oppose a fascist measure approved by Hearst. Especially wrought up was Hearst over the first national convention of the American Student Union, a united organization initiated by the National Student League and the Student League for Industrial Democracy in Columbus on Decembe 28 and 29. Hearst believes that thi move was secretly plotted. He "sup ports" this assumption by pointing ou that "significantly" the first news of th appeared in The Daily Worker. Fo lowing his great exposure of the Con munist plot, to which, incidentally Hearst linked such outstanding libe als as Professor Robert Morss Lovet Dr. Harry F. Ward and Corliss L mont, Hearst published a story th next day under the heading "Red R volt Plot Arouses Nation." Acti for the "nation" were A. Cressy Mo rison, Director of the Union Carb and Chemical Corp. and president the R.O.T.C. Association of the Un States, and Colonel Orville Johnson Washington, Director-General of R.O.T.C. Association, who of approved the Hearst campaign. the combined struggle of all anti cist and anti-war forces will be ab thwart this latest Hearst mena drive to destroy the remaining ves of liberty in America.

"Let Freedom Ring" A[illegible]

WHEN on November 30 *Freedom Ring* was forc close after a run of only three half weeks on Broadway, THE MASSES articulated the feelings merous supporters of the le theater; we urged, as forcefully could, that some individual or "resurrect this play at once f undeserved grave." The Union, sensitive to the situa which one of the most color passionately true stories of co rary life had been muted, n[illegible] with the playwright and act the result that *Let Freedom* opened on December 17 at th Repertory Theater. Every MASSES reader who can poss is urged to do so; likewis[illegible] ganization that believes alive one of the best s[illegible] ever given in America.

New Masses

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What Kind of Recovery?

IT strikes us as not only futile but as an actual disservice to the millions of unemployed wage workers, bankrupt farmers and jobless professional people of all categories who face another terrible winter in these United States, to argue for some five and one-half pages, as The New Republic does in its issue for December 18, as to whether genuine recovery is here or not.

Recovery in the sense in which Stuart Chase foreshadows it in his article means, if it means anything at all, that the lords of monopoly capital, having overcome their errors as a result of the lessons of the crisis, are now willing to allow the government—the capitalist state—to develop and operate directly certain "new"—probably the least lucrative—industries. Mr. Chase says in his final conclusion:

> But, as you may object, the government is not competent to develop new industries; its administrative techniques are deplorable. That is as may be. We can debate the matter indefinitely, but it is another story. We assumed that private capital could balance the system. I sought to find theoretical methods whereby the community itself might balance the system without revolutionary change. *If you feel that the community is incompetent, you are then arguing in effect that complete breakdown and revolution are inevitable.* That is your privilege. Personally, I think the state can develop new industries at least as well as the real estate operators developed unrentable skyscrapers. It might do even a shade better [our italics].

The catch in this form of argument, designed to put out of court all those contemporaries who might not believe in the necessity of revolution, is that Mr. Chase deliberately tries to identify government under the capitalist state with the "community." The interests of the great majority of the "community" are *not* those of the bankers, the bankers and their corporation well-paid troubadours of the press, pulpit, films and schools. There will continue to be, basic differences social, cultural and economic between this vast majority of the people and the minority ruling class.

Mr. Chase does not "hold that the community is incompetent." This is a little demagogy on the part of Mr. Chase—who some years ago was turning out books and doing his utmost in an individual attempt to salvage capitalism by eliminating waste in production and distribution.

But the competency of the "community" to run industry and supply the needs of the working population is a competency whose full possibilities—those of the workers of all categories—can be released fully *only* by cracking up the power of the present ruling clique of capitalists and establishing a government which really represents the economic and social needs of the useful section of the population—the majority. This, of course, *is* revolution—but this is what genuine recovery means for the millions of those now impoverished, humiliated and intimidated by the capitalists, their government and its recovery program that completely fails to benefit the masses.

The uneven development of capitalism—both as between industries and internationally, a specially destructive factor which Lenin applied from the findings of Marx and Engels to the period of imperialism—is something that seems to escape Stuart Chase entirely. He talks glibly of the possibilities of new industries through "issues of non-interest bearing credit," presumably government credits. But what of the other industries whose special interests would be affected adversely by these new enterprises? And certainly there is nothing in the record of the last few years to indicate that the overlords of big industry are going to surrender to any such schemes. What has happened to the national housing campaign? What has happened to the rigid regulation of public utilities that was announced so triumphantly? Speaking in terms of the needs of unemployed and impoverished millions of this country, precisely nothing.

Let us take another question: that of immigration. It is not necessary here to give the statistics for immigration from the early period of capitalist expansion here to the second expansion period following the World War. It is enough to say that this influx of millions of workers who created enormous amounts of surplus value and at the same time furnished probably the largest growing market that any capitalist was blessed with, no longer comes to our shores.

The desired enlarged market can come only in two ways—one by a rapid rise in wages, an increased share of workers in the products of industry and by what is called the "normal" increase in population by a surplus of births over deaths—or by a combination of the two.

But the capitalist class, especially in the big industries, is busy reducing the total income of the wage earners—by methods with which Mr. Chase appears to be familiar.

The economic and social standards of the entire working population have been reduced savagely during the six years of the crisis. The birth rate will continue to fall. The share of workers in industrial production will decrease. A permanent army of unemployed, whose minimum maintenance costs are assessed on the employed workers, is here.

Please, Mr. Chase, tell us why this is recovery? Profits have increased, yes, but by what enormous efforts and at what cost to the living standard and health of the working people of the richest country in the world.

When we said at the beginning of these notes that we thought your article and the introductory argument a disservice to the millions who face another terrible winter, we meant that this kind of writing, while it may have some interest for those social "welfare" workers who love to take a scalpel along in their case investigations of the causes and cure of poverty, only tends to create confusion and not the clarity that is needed today in all anti-capitalist circles. Such meanderings in the realms of futile money-credit theories encourage many to dodge and confuse the basic issue: that the evils of which you quite rightly complain will be cured only by a powerful industrial union-labor movement and by a powerful independent party of wage earners and farmers committed to uncompromising battle against a decadent and an increasingly cruel monopoly capitalism.

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What the Victory Means

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON, Dec. 23.

THE struggle between the British government and the British people—for it was nothing less—has resulted in an important though limited victory for the British people. The fall of Hoare and the appointment of Eden to the Foreign Office means that the whole line of world policy decided upon by the British cabinet cannot now be carried through immediately or in its present form.

Whether or not it means any more than this is not yet decided. But before we describe the next stage of the struggle let us be clear about how much is at stake, for what is at stake is not merely the question of the betrayal or support of Ethiopia, of loyalty or disloyalty to the covenant of the League. What is at stake is the peace of the world, for we now know that the British government was bent on nothing less than the complete destruction of every one of those barriers which stand in the way of fascist aggression.

A memorandum had actually been drawn up by the British cabinet on what is called the reconstruction of the League. The essence of this deadly document was that a new controlling body was to be set up within the League. This body was to have all effective power in its hands. It was to be called the steering committee and it was to be composed of Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany. All the small powers and the Soviet Union were to be excluded from it. Can anyone doubt for a second whither this steering committee would steer? It would steer straight for a German attack upon the Soviet Union.

That and nothing else was the whole purpose of the plan, and I am informed that the clearer-minded members of the British cabinet had now reached a full consciousness of this. They had decided that at all costs things must be so arranged that Germany can attack the Soviet Union during the coming years. The main achievement of Hoare was nothing less than a spontaneous, unorganized but very real People's Front which arose in Britain in the last two weeks in order to reveal and to check this whole disastrous policy.

But much that we now know all this means more that this line of policy has been for the moment checked, for I do not believe that this deadly scheme for what is called the reorganization of the League will be pushed for some months at any rate. Whether we have gained any more than the substitution of Eden for Hoare than months of delay remains to be seen depends almost entirely upon the pressure of British opinion upon the government is maintained. If the British government can now be pushed along a policy of real cooperation with the other League states, if above all they can be forced to fix an early date for the application of oil sanctions, if a solid alliance for mutual defense by the League powers against any counter attack from Mussolini is cemented, then indeed we shall be on the way to gaining much more, for then we shall be on the way to forcing our rulers to pursue a policy which can undoubtedly keep the peace of Europe for a considerable period by making it clear that aggression by fascist states lead only to their downfall.

But this decisive success has still to be achieved. It is far too early yet to suggest that the British government has been forced into the path of peace. Their headlong progress down the path to immediate world war has been checked but we have still to drive them to take the first step down the other path. I believe, however, that the appointment of Eden reveals that they are now distinctly scared of the weight of public opinion (as well they may be) and that we have the opportunity of pushing them much further—if only the pressure is not relaxed for a moment.

If anyone thought that either the government or their spokesmen in the press had undergone a real change of heart, if anyone thought that their change of policy represented anything more than a yielding to a force which they could not resist, the comments of the whole capitalist press over the week-end should have dispelled their illusion. Mr. Baldwin himself told us that neither he nor anyone of his cabinet colleagues had any conception that their endorsement of the Hoare-Laval deal was contrary to their pledges at the general election. I really believe that in one sense this is true. But if so it reveals a sort of moral idiocy, as they sometimes say in the police courts, which cannot be exaggerated. Moreover, other spokesmen of the government and of the governing class made it perfectly clear that they have simply been forced off their essential policy by an outbreak of public protest which they never dreamt would occur and which they do not begin to understand.

The Observer, for example, quietly proposes that Sir Samuel Hoare should be rested for a few months while the clamor dies down, and then reappointed Foreign Secretary. Mr. Garvin, the editor of The Observer, ends his article on the peace terms with the words "Resurgam"—"They shall rise again." "Scrutator," an influential writer in the other great bourgeois Sunday paper, The Sunday Times, says in so many words that nothing was wrong with the actual peace terms; the only trouble was they were clumsily put over. "The vice," he writes, "of this particular plan was not inherent or absolute but relative to the lack of preparation of the public mind." The Daily Telegraph, the government's own especial press organ, says the same thing even more crudely. The betrayal of Ethiopia, says their leader-writer, was "inexcusably abrupt." The next time we betray somebody or something, say Ethiopia or the peace of the world for instance, we must do it more gradually and suavely.

Not only the cabinet but the ruling sections of the governing class who control the great newspapers have not the faintest conception of why public opinion arose and smote them. They have simply yielded to what they see to be an uncontrollable force. They regard popular opinion in this country as a sort of wild beast which on this occasion unfortunately got loose and must therefore be humored and temporized with for a little while, until it can be corralled once more. If and when that has been accomplished they will immediately revert to their former policy of the betrayal of world peace. If they were forced down the path of genuine support of the League and genuine coercion of the aggressor it will be at the point of the bayonet of popular pressure alone.

These cable dispatches by John Strachey appear weekly in The New Masses.

The Assumption of Song

Who have been to the Soviets carry
Always blue in the eyes of the steep steppes
Of snow.

Peal of Chimera from St. Basle.
Eye torn out of history
And the madness.

That glint on walls of ribald religion
Is not gold,
Is not love
In the curious beds of luxury.

We have done away
With progress, the phrase of billboard
(Tiara in the comb
Of my lady's hair).

Telescope the future of eons
With the hard impact of steeled fist,
Drunk with the power behind it.

The world of the proletariat
Moves like a song,
The Soviets singing.

NORMA[illegible]

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The Underground Speaks

A Report from Germany

JOHN L. SPIVAK

WARSAW.

THREE strong muscle-men were throwing one another about in what I immediately suspected was a funny act when I walked into the smoke-laden Alkazar cabaret on Reeperbann in the St. Pauli district in Hamburg and found a vacant table at a corner of the dance floor. The place was crowded with men and women, some in evening clothes, and a good sprinkling of Nazis in black and brown and the greenish grey of the air forces despite the Nazi Party prohibition to men in uniform frequenting night clubs.

It was ten thirty and though I had been told to be there at eleven o'clock, I arrived a little earlier lest all the corner tables be taken. I ordered a liqueur and sat there sipping it and wondering whether I was on a wild goose chase. Two months before in Paris I had met some Communist refugees who had fled Germany when heads began to roll and I had expressed a desire to be put in touch with the Communist underground movement. I knew I was making a dangerous request, dangerous not so much to me but to the Communist who would meet me, should I be followed. But, everyone expects the Communists to seize control of Germany when Hitler collapses, yet few, even among the best-informed refugee circles, know the actual Communist strength and what they are thinking of doing in such an event. The activities of the underground movement is so befogged with rumors and patently exaggerated assertions that some real information from an official source seemed to me worth the risk.

So far as I was concerned, should we be caught, I should either be ordered out of the country or given a taste of a Nazi prison, but for the Communist it meant years in prison and possibly death. So I was not surprised when I was told that I would be given an answer to my request on the morrow.

On the next day I was asked when I expected to be in Germany.

"I don't know, but approximately within two months."

"Very well, then. On ——— (giving a date) you be at the Alkazar cabaret in Hamburg at eleven o'clock. Take corner table if one is vacant or as near to a corner table as possible if they are all taken, and wait there. A comrade will get in touch with you."

"A cabaret!" I said, a little surprised.

"Yes; it is better than for a stranger to go to a home or for someone to call on him at his hotel. For one meeting of this nature it is best. There is music and that drowns the sound of voices and then people are more interested in their partners and the performers to pay much attention to others at the tables. There are many reasons why a cabaret is best for a meeting like this."

"You're running the show," I agreed. "How long do I wait? I'm not much good at this Edgar Wallace stuff."

They did not smile at my lightheartedness. "Wait two hours," they said seriously. "If no one gets in touch with you then, be there again on the following night, same time and again the night after. It is best to allow three days. We don't know what difficulties the person who will get in touch with you may have, to get there at a specific time."

So here I sat in this sumptuously furnished cabaret heavy with the scent of wines and perfumes and expensive tobacco, uncertain whether to feel like a conspirator or a fool. An appointment made two months ago to meet a person I did not know and who did not know me sounded a little silly, but it had the thrill of mystery, so I sat there smoking and sipping the liqueur and wondering whether anyone would really show up.

"Just be sure you are not followed," they had impressed on me in Paris and I made so sure, by walking, driving along deserted streets and changing taxis for two solid hours that the thought of going through that procedure again for possibly two more nights was very disturbing.

Pleasure seekers kept strolling in with Aryan women on their arms. There were very few women with dark hair I noticed. The place was pretty well filled and I looked at my watch, feeling a little foolish for it was eleven-thirty and no one had appeared. Six beefy girls, with the whole dance floor to themselves, were raising tired legs in what I assumed was a dance. At an adjoining table was an S.A. man, an officer of high rank who was having a grand time flirting with a really gorgeous blond of the tea-and-cabaret type. They had taken their table about a half hour earlier and their proximity caused me a bit of uneasiness for if whoever was to get in touch with me saw him there, the chances of his appearing would be slim. I had agreed to be there for three successive nights and I gave myself up to brooding over the whole matter when the Nazi officer, after searching his pockets for a match turned to me and politely asked if I had one.

"The waiter is not around," he explained apologetically.

I offered him my cigarette lighter and he lit the blond's and his own gold-tipped cigarette.

"You are a foreigner?" he asked, returning the lighter with profuse thanks. "English?"

"No. American."

"A wonderful country," he smiled. "One day I should like to go there to see it for myself."

He was apparently trying to be pleasant to a foreigner alone at a neighboring table, but all he succeeded in doing was to make me uncomfortable. Hope that my appointment might be kept went glimmering, fo if the Communist saw me talking with th Nazi officer he would certainly not make himself known.

"You are waiting for some one?"

"No," I said casually. "I had nothing t do tonight so I thought I'd spend a li time here."

"Ach, so! Well, why not join us?" invited me cheerfully.

He wouldn't listen to my protests. H rose, clicked his heels and introduced hi self and the beautiful blond.

"My name's Spivak," I muttered.

The waiter brought a bottle of wine. T music played a soft waltz and cou strolled out onto the floor.

"To the new Germany," said my clinking glass against mine.

WE DRANK to the new Germa decided that I might just as we vage something from the evening by with him since my appointment f evening at least was now ruined, was startled by a voice saying in Engli

"I believe we have an appointment h

It took me a moment or two to re that it was the Nazi officer who was ing. Luckily the lights had been dim for the dance. I don't know what m pression was, but the beautiful Aryan of the perfect tea-and-cabaret type la in a soft, well-modulated voice and the officer grinned boyishly.

"I beg pardon?" I said.

"An appointment for eleven o'clo night at the Alkazar, arranged b friends in Paris?"

I looked at him again. He n slowly, his boyish grin growing more nounced.

"You want to know something ab underground movement in Germa

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asked quietly, leaning towards me a trifle. "What do you wish to know?"

"But—" I stared at the rank on his uniform.

"There are many of us in Nazi uniforms," he smiled.

He raised his glass again.

"Shall we drink again to the new Germany?" he asked, and this time I understood.

So, while the band played and couples glided gracefully about on the highly-waxed floor, while the clink of wine glasses mingled with laughter, this man whose head would have been the price had he been discovered, answered my questions about the underground movement.

"The Communists in Germany were so strong," I began, "what has happened to the Party during the period since Hitler is in power?"

"Some of the facts you probably already know," he smiled, toying with his glass. "We had a far more difficult time after the Nazis got in control than the world realizes. Much of it was due to our own carelessness for when it looked as though Hitler might gain the government there was a tremendous increase in Communist Party membership. We had about 250,000 members. I am not considering sympathizers at present. Among any of the new recruits were spies—ough to make us all sick when we think it. Apparently Hitler, anticipating attaining power, deliberately sent many into the Party so as to discover who the Communists ere. In that he was wiser than we. Others were opportunists who thought we would achieve power and so wanted to be the Communist ranks. When the Nazis the government these opportunists beyed us.

'With spies in our midst there were, as can readily see, wholesale arrests. Forately the spies had not penetrated to the er ranks of the leadership so a great of them escaped notice. The Party, irse, went underground immediately took the spies with them so that our continued to be arrested with a disheartening regularity. Eventually, course, we were forced to become a ely-knit body and that is an important evement. Today we have around 50,000 nbers, most of them left from the origi- Party."

hile he talked he toyed with the long of his wine glass, smiling in that boyanner as though he were telling naughty s and I, too, listening had to keep re- ng myself to smile and nod appreciawhile the blond Aryan of the tea-and- type (I hope, should she ever read t.at she realizes I mean this as a very compliment) kept her eyes constantly ople approaching or passing our table hile she occasionally nodded her head gh somewhat amused by the funny

"Are many of the Communists in the Nazi Party now?"

"No. Some of us are—a very few. Most Party members are in the labor front—among the industrial and agricultural workers Surely we want to carry on propaganda among the Nazis and also among the workers and the farmers. Of course, it is necessary for some of us to be in the Nazi Party—so we are. Before Hitler got in power we had between five and six million Communist sympathizers. That is history. After the Nazis got the government many of those sympathizers were won away from us. Hitler made serious inroads among some workers, who were swayed by propaganda and actually thought that a form of socialism would be effected. However, as time went on and instead of socialism they discovered it was one of the worst forms of fascism, the left wing of the Nazi Party became active. They and the people talked of a "new revolution" to achieve socialism. It was then that the Blood Purge came on June 30. The left wing was shattered and the S.A. which had been powerful, lost its importance.

"The Blood Purge had a very beneficial effect. It showed the workers precisely where Hitler stood and ended their dream of a 'new revolution.' Workers whom Hitler had won two years ago were greatly disappointed and swerved away from the Nazis though, of course, they dare not show it too openly.

"During this entire period, Communists were still being arrested due to the host of spies still in the underground movement. When one least expected it, some active Communist was whisked away to a concentration camp.

"When we went underground we had organized into cells of five so as to reduce the possibility of spies knowing more than four members; but despite this precaution, whole cells were arrested time after time until we realized that even a cell of five was too big. Today we have tightened up; our cells consist of only three members and these three work with people who do not in the least suspect that the three are Communists. Of these three only one has contact with the Communist Party representative. The other two even do not know who the contact is. That is how careful the dance is so similar to cabarets you find in almost all port centers—"

WITHOUT the slightest change in intonation or sign on his face he had abruptly switched from the English he had been speaking to German. A waiter had approached behind him to place a newly arrived couple at a nearby table and though my host's back was to the waiter the switch in language and subject occurred when the waiter was still five feet away. The beautiful Aryan, whose smile and appreciative nod of the stories her companion was telling never left her pretty lips, had obviously signalled him, probably by a pressure of the foot or the knee under the table—a procedure that continued throughout the whole interview whenever someone approached our table.

"How do you meet—if you can tell me?"

"Of course. I am here to tell—as much as I can," he laughed. "The cells meet at regular intervals at places decided on beforehand. Should anyone walk in on one of these meetings he would find only a normal, friendly gathering at a person's home. We have dinner, a little wine or beer on the table, the radio plays—everyone is cheerful as friends gathered together should be. At other times we take walks in the co try—we Germans are very fond of walking, you know. We meet in any of the innumerable ways that everyday people normally meet. At these cell meetings we discuss our work, lay plans for other work, the one in touch with the Party transmits instructions received and so on. We lay plans for our propaganda which is now carried on in the most careful manner possible. We have lost too many men and women because of carelessness."

"Are Communists still being picked up despite your tightening the cells?"

"Oh, yes! Lots of them! In some areas as around Hessen there are seven to ten trials every day of those arrested for carrying on Communist propaganda. In Thuringia the average is about the same. In industrial centers the average is somewhat smaller—"

"That is strange, isn't it, since you have the greatest concentration of Party members in the industrial centers?"

"In a big city everyone does not know everyone else, whereas in rural areas where we are very active now, it is extremely difficult to work and that is the chief reason for the continued arrests. In a small country area your activity becomes known almost immediately. But—" and he laughed again boyishly as he touched his glass to mine—"we have learned from Ford. We have established a Belt System, isn't that what you call it? As soon as one is arrested, another is ready to step in his place at a moment's notice."

"How extensive is your propaganda and how effective?"

"Our best propagandist is Hitler and his Nazis," he smiled. "Hitler is doing a great deal to develop Communist sympathizers. So far as our own work is concerned, you know, of course, about the literature that's smuggled in like books, pamphlets, etc. The circulation of these smuggled papers is quite small and its effectiveness is difficult to gauge. They are probably not very effective in themselves, but we cannot judge by the effectiveness of one means. They are all little rivulets which eventually add up to a stream.

"Then we have our own mimeographed

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newspapers which come out at irregular intervals. Here in Hamburg we have three. In Berlin we have eight. The number varies according to the size of the center. The circulation of these papers, too, is very small, but in their own way they are quite effective. Then there are other propaganda methods; which, necessarily, are constantly being changed. At present, for instance, we are scattering round bits of paper and cardboard which look exactly like money when on the ground. We see to it that they are scattered particularly in places where women have to stand in line for their quarter of a pound of butter, for instance. These women are already irritable and are voicing their displeasure at the food shortage quite openly. When they see what seems to be a coin they pick it up only to find a legend on it like 'Death to Hitler' or 'Demand food instead of armies' and so on. No one dares to hold on to the paper, so they drop it again where it lies ready for the next person to pick it up. A trifle, of course. But when a people is irritable, suggestions pounded in day in and day out produce a profound effect in the long run. Our best work, of course, is being done in the industrial centers where, despite the inroads made by the Nazis among the workers, the nucleus of the Party remained pretty much intact. The groups are smaller, of course, but we are more solidified."

"YOU have not had a drink for some time," the beautiful blond Aryan interrupted softly, giving us her best social smile.

The three of us immediately raised our glasses, drank with broadly-beaming faces and applauded an act which had just finished which I am sure none of us saw.

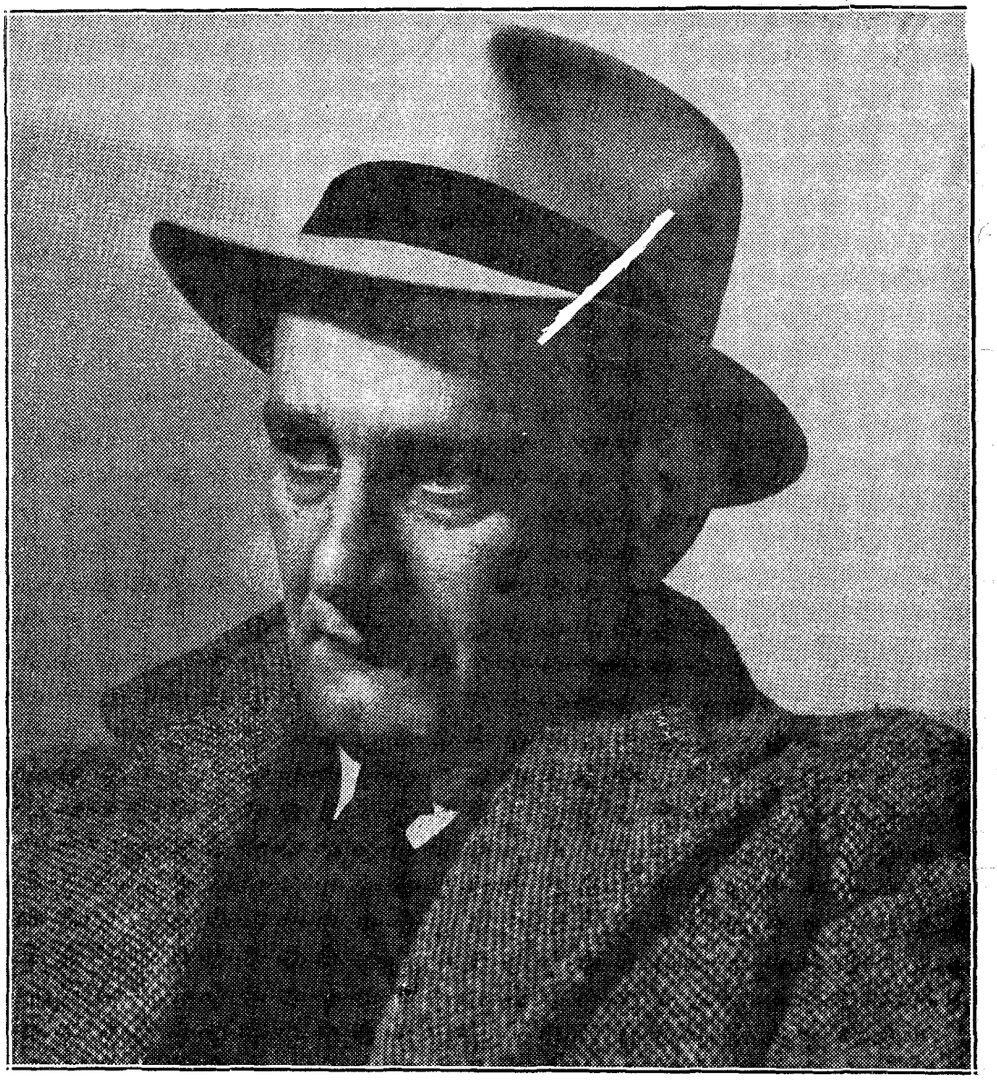
"Yes," he continued thoughtfully, though still wearing that smile, "we have dropped the theater—you know, the detailed stories that we formerly gave to the Party press outside. We have become far too serious for that. Under conditions where it means imprisonment or death people do not act as though performing on a stage for applause. They act in simple, dead earnest and this very seriousness and realization of what they are doing and the risks they are taking has welded those of us who are now working with an unbreakable band of steel. It has given us a new outlook on the revolution, on life and on our work.

"How seriously we take our work is evidenced by what happens when we are arrested. Invariably we keep our mouths shut. Despite tortures, despite anything that they can do, those who are caught accept their fate. We have a smaller Party, but it is one of tempered steel," he repeated with a note of pride.

"Are the tortures today as brutal as when Hitler first took power?"

"That depends on the region and the people in charge. The German people are not sadists; they are really a kindly people and the tortures inflicted on the Communists in the early period of the Nazi regime has revolted many a German. Today there are still vicious, inhuman tortures. But they have learned that Communists will not talk; they have developed a feeling of admiration for the stoical suffering that many Communists have undergone.

"The local courts, fearing public opinion especially in small, agricultural areas, where everyone knows the man arrested, have been inclined to deal gingerly with many of the accused Communists. This has forced the Nazis to send special police because they could not trust the local courts and the local police to handle the Communists in the old-fashioned way. Strange situations have arisen as a result of this changing attitude by the courts and the people. Recently in Giessen, for instance, the local police were supplanted by special police sent from Kassel in distant Prussia because the local police would not torture the Communists. The Kassel police were especially picked because they enjoyed brutality and when they started to beat up the Communists the Giessen police threatened to beat them up and drive them out of town if they did not stop it! These cases are important as showing the significant change towards the Communists and it has become particularly noticeable within the past half year—the same period when the shortage of food stuffs became pronounced."



JOHN L. SPIVAK

Photograph by Irving Lerner

"How many are in the prisons and concentration camps now? The Nazis refuse to give any figures."

"We have a fairly good idea, though we do not have the exact figures. Those are kept in so many different ways and in different places. I should say there are about 200,000 in the prisons and about 100,000 in the concentration camps. The average sentence is about two and one-half years."

"Have any recently been sentenced to death by the courts for Communist activity?"

"The beheading of Communists by court order continues," he said, for the moment losing his smile. "And the bodies of Communists are constantly being found, usually in the woods outside the industrial centers or even in the rural districts. In Berlin, where the woods around the city is a favorite place for walks on holidays it is not infrequent for hikers to stumble upon the dead bodies of Communists. Some ha

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obviously been tortured to death; others had met their end by a merciful shot. When such a body is found the people realize that it was a Communist and often walk away, leaving the body to be discovered by children who notify the police or by the police themselves when the stench of decomposition attracts too much attention."

"Are Socialists, too, murdered?"

"Yes; some. Many have been imprisoned or killed, but their activity is comparatively small. They used to be quite active and maintained connections between Berlin and Prague but spies got into the organization and virtually destroyed it. The Socialists are now trying to rebuild, but without much apparent success."

"Is Socialist strength gaining?"

"No; its strength is chiefly among the older generation—those who have been Socialists most of their lives. The younger generation is swinging toward us."

"What's the strength of the Communist Party now—so far as sympathizers are concerned?"

"We lost ground at first as I said, but today we are making enormous strides. I think we can safely estimate that the number of sympathizers now is around eight million, as against five or six million before Hitler took power."

"Is the Nazi strength great among the people?"

"I should say that there are about 100,000 persons in Germany who really believe in the Nazi principles. The rest are Nazis because they got good jobs out of the regime and considerable graft."

"That being the case, with the Nazis losing the people's sympathy and the Communists gaining, how long can Hitler last?"

"Barring a war—for a very long time."

I looked at him a little surprised.

"But the financial condition of the country is very precarious. Hitler has enough money to last another year. Then comes inflation, more unemployment. People are grumbling. Will the people stand for it?"

He smiled a little grimly:

"The Nazis have the army and the army has the guns. It would suicide at present to attempt to seize the government. We would be slaughtered. In the event of war, when soldiers are dissatisfied and a lot of us sympathizers have arms and can lay hands on machine guns, munition, bombs, planes—then it becomes a different story."

"But what happens when Hitler cracks?"

"That depends upon a great many circumstances—the economic and world political conditions at the time. At present it looks like the dictatorship will be assumed by the military who already show a tendency toward the restoration of the Hohenzollerns. Should that happen, there will be, of course, concessions to the dissatisfied populace, like elections and so on—probably a monarchy patterned after the one in England, but with not so much freedom. The Reichswehr is far more shrewd than the Nazi Party. The General Staff is composed of scholars who know not only the military situation but the political and economic as well. They know what is happening. But, though the General Staff is very competent, its cleverness is limited. They want to maintain the present economic system and it is this disintegrating system which will defeat them in the long run. We Communists can only confine ourselves to preparing the workers and the farmers to seize and hold power when the upholders of the system have been so weakened by its disintegration that the soldiers upon whom the General Staff depends, will also rebel and be ready to turn against them."

"You have not had a drink for some time and you are not looking at the show," the beautiful Aryan reminded us again.

HE smiled quickly at her. We raised our glasses, touched them to one another and drank silently.

"Conditions make for revolutions, not Communists," he continued quietly. "The period Germany is passing through today is but another step in our direction. Before Hitler is through he will have helped considerably to wreck the already weak capitalist system here."

"But when Hitler goes, there will be chaos. What will the Communists do then?"

"Why will there be chaos?" he asked gently. "The strings of government are never suddenly thrown to the wind. Those in power know when they are about to collapse and those seeking power also know it and have prepared for it—for a long time. There may be some chaotic conditions for a while, but some group will control the army and that is the group that will emerge in control. It is not, of course, inevitable that when Hitler goes Communism follows. The people are not quite ready for a Communist attempt, the conditions are not ripe and though we gain sympathizers rapidly (this is even more important) we are not ready."

"But a war seems to be likely in the next two, possibly three years. Will the Communists launch a civil war which will hasten the disintegrating process?"

"That depends on conditions. We are not rushing into anything. If the war is against the Soviet Union, as from all indications it will be, then it may become necessary. Otherwise we may just continue to work quietly."

"Are you so organized that you could tear the country apart by civil war immediately after a war began?"

"No. It would take at least half a year before we could do effective work along that line."

"It is past two," the beautiful Aryan reminded him.

The place was emptying and was beginning to take on a sad and dismal air. "I think we must go," he said apologetically.

"Tell me," I said, "is it all right to say where we met?"

"Of course!" he laughed boyishly. "Why not? No one knows me here. I am not from Hamburg and before morning I shall be far away, ready for my day's work. Only don't describe me!"

"And the Fraulein? I have been wondering why she is here."

"For several reasons. This is not a place for a Nazi officer to come alone and sit for a long time talking to a foreigner. We would attract attention. Secondly, to keep her eyes open while we talked, but that is incidental; and thirdly, to follow me when we leave here to make sure that no one else is following me."

"You sure take a lot of precautions!" I commented.

"That is why my head is still on my shoulders," he said simply.

"Shall I stay, go first, or what?"

"You stay for about fifteen minutes after we leave. Well—"

We rose. The woman offered her hand.

"Charming evening, nicht?" she said in her best social tone.

He clasped mine in a firm grip. "We shall meet again one day I'm sure."

"Auf wiedersehen," they said.

I sat staring at their departing backs. A new act was on, some more beefy girls raising tired, fat legs. When the fifteen minutes were up, I drained the rest of the wine in my glass—to them:

"Auf wiedersehen—in a happier Germany!"

Another article about Germany will appear in next week's issue.

STORM

Every quarter minute a great wave dies
—swooning along the changing shore—
but the storm mounts higher and higher
and each wave cries, I am the storm!
Each wave marching across a thousand miles,
called by the moon, spurred by the wind,
sped by ranks behind, and yet leading them,
speeding ranks before, and by them led
—each wave exultant unto its death—
cries, I am the storm!

and each is right.

DAVID GREENHOOD.

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Vermont People's Front, 1776-1936

JACK WILGUS

RUTLAND.

IN Vermont there are very clear indications that the cohorts of fascism are forming. First indications occurred last spring when the leaders in the American Legion opened a drive in Barre, which they termed the "Red center of Vermont." At the same time the Legion and Elks moved through the state legislature to have the Communist Party stricken from the ballot. This was stopped by mass pressure and by the appearance before the legislature of Mayor John Gordon of Barre in behalf of the rights of free speech. The Legion-Elks drive in Barre met empty response, the leaders nearly empty halls. And again Mayor Gordon stood up and defended the constitutional rights of the Communist Party to maintain quarters and activities in the city of Barre. He stated that any attacks upon the Communists or Socialists are attacks on the whole labor movement.

The five marble towns now on strike appeared just a few months ago, quiet, orderly, typically New England and "far from the madding crowd." Starvation wages and the demand that their union be recognized brought on the class war which has turned those villages into strongholds which appear at the present time to be almost impregnable. The Vermonters show themselves fierce strikers. Their combat forces and flying squadrons cannot be halted by the great force of company police and sheriffs, and those servants of the rich Proctor interests resort to slugging and terrorizing only under cover of night, retreating when the alarm calls forth the people of the towns. Thus far the first marble strike to have occurred in Vermont is gaining and militant. Assistance, both physical and financial, has come quickly forth from every union local in the state and from large numbers of farmers. From all over the east response to the call for financial assistance has been surprisingly fine. But the forces of the law, the press and finance have now been augmented by what are called "The Minutemen of Vermont," newly set-up vigilantes with the avowed purpose of "smashing the trade unions in Vermont."

The strikers have been quick in dealing with the vigilantes. Wherever the vigilantes have gathered there have been union men somewhere in the halls. When the Minutemen informed their storm troopers that upon the sharp blast three times of the fire whistle in Proctor they must gather for an attack on the pickets, day or night, the unions called mass meetings and told the men they likewise must respond en masse when they heard the fire whistle give the alarm and to concentrate on whatever town the call came from, in flying squadrons.

The officials of the Vermont Marble Company laid in wait to catch any Communists they could detect. Two armed deputies with revolvers in their hands stepped before a car I was driving into Proctor and getting on the running-boards, instructed me to drive to the Company Barracks. They held me five hours during which time I was constantly cross-examined and threatened. They told me that mass picketing of all the people, men, women and children in the towns involved must be stopped, because "the law can't handle picket lines with women and children in the mobs." I was told that if I was ever seen there again "men who aren't so gentle as we are will take you in hand." Then I was turned over to States Attorney Bloomer. He gave me just twenty-four hours to leave Rutland County and said in answer to a question I put to him, "We don't need no law. But I won't be responsible for what may happen to you if you are caught here after twenty-four hours." I told the editor of The Rutland Herald of this illegal arrest and my having been held incommunicado and the threat of what would happen if I did not get out. He said he would certainly put the news in his paper, but first he must hear the States Attorney's story. Nothing relating to this instance has ever appeared in the paper. I am still in Rutland County, watched and often followed, but I have addressed a mass meeting and gone about unmolested.

The newspaper, at first playing the game of impartial observer, is doing exactly what the national press did leading up to the World War, the trick which made me a soldier in 1917-18. Little by little they are turning against the strikers. Pictures of bandaged heads and smashed houses, atrocity stories, violence headlines, editorial horror stories, always against the strikers, but seldom against the night riders who terrorize the workers and the brutal assaults upon strikers by company thugs. They are systematically endeavoring to build up sentiment against the striking marble and quarry workers of what has proved thus far to be the impregnable five towns.

Many miles to the north, in Newport, men gathered together and formed a W.P.A. union, the fourth in the state. They met in a poolroom. After they had been in session a half hour the chief of police arrived. He gave the organizer from Barre just fifteen minutes in which to leave town. A few days later the poolroom proprietor had his license revoked and the mayor of Newport published a statement in the paper that any man joining the W.P.A. union would not only lose his relief, but would also be sentenced to jail. The union still goes on and grows, in Newport, with every force of terror and intimidation let loose on the membership and their families.

A Strikers' Civil Rights Committee has been set up in Manchester, Vermont, and is expanding. They published their proclamation in defense of the strikers on the front pages of recent Vermont papers, in large boxes. As they are very prominent middle-class and professional Vermonters this has elicited no end of editorial gasps and snorts, but no overt criticisms. For the first time farmers and prominent citizens have joined the forces of labor in this state.

Out of the strike has sprung the Vermont Farmer-Labor Party, sponsored by the State Federation of Labor, and starting in small hamlets and towns here and there to be knit together later in a state convention. Forces are thus clearly dividing between Vermont reactionaries of the cheap Coolidge tradition and the progressive elements.

On Armistice Day a United Front mass meeting of over 800 gathered in little Middlebury and in the United Front against war and fascism were such organizations as the Legion Post and the women's club and local merchants' association and the farm grange. At the same time, clear across the state, in Windsor, the school children voted unanimously not to support their country in any war it might undertake. And in this same small town the Rotary Club invited the Vermont Communist Organizer to speak before them and tell them just what the Communists are doing and aim to do in America. He was more than favorably received by townspeople who are nearly as badly off as the workers.

Every day a bombshell bursts. Papers come out in defense of the unions or in attacks, people of prominence take definite sides, the Socialist locals of one county call for the United Front with the Communists, while those on the other side of the state, attack us. Labor leaders Red-bait, and other labor leaders come to our support. There are leaders in the strike who are militant and fast learning from struggle and those who show sharp cleavage from militancy. There was the minister who sharply astounded people for miles around by stating in his pulpit that he would invite a Communist to speak in his place one of these Sundays and there are the pulpiteers who come out and shout that labor wants war so it can turn the forces of violence into channels helpful to the overthrow of the existing order. So fast are forces shifting or lining up that one has all he can do to keep from being bewildered. Zero weather and white hills bring no sleep to stirring centers of action in old Vermont today.

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How "Under Fire" Was Published

SIMONE TERY

I DO NOT doubt that the day in 1916 when I first saw Henri Barbusse marks an important date in the life of Barbusse and in the history of mankind.

My father, Gustave Tery, one of the great French polemicists, had founded L'Oeuvre, a daily newspaper. He had been maddened to see every day in the academic newspapers "the old gentlemen" gayly encouraging young people to go and kill for civilization and What is Right. He thought that civilization and What is Right was not where these official journalists, these comfortable old men, feigned to see it; and that it was time that the feelings of the soldiers in the trenches and all the poor people of France whose sons, husbands and brothers the war was slaughtering, who could bear no more of misery and sadness, should be expressed. It was in order to tell the truth —at least as far as the terrible censorship would allow—that he had established L'Oeuvre.

I was not very big at the time. I was a boarding student at a Lycee at Versailles, where I studied; and I had a holiday every fifteen days to go to see my father in Paris. But he was terrifically busy and most often, after having embraced me, he told me to wait in a corner of his office and I remained there, making myself insignificant, as wise as a mouse. But there was nothing to stop me from watching the goings and comings or from listening to what the people, my father's collaborators and visitors, said.

One day I saw a soldier enter who appeared immense to me. He was so thin that his skyblue soldier's coat, discolored by the rain and dirt, twice too big for him, floated on his large body and beat against the calves of his legs. On his face, pale and wasted away, with its long thin nose, one could read sweetness, sorrow, resolution. He had above all a striking appearance. In his clear eyes, full of dreams, there surged suddenly an anguished look, which would be extinguished and would burst forth anew, like the beacon of a light house.

Barbusse went across the room in three long steps, his body a bit bent over, and threw on my father's desk a large manuscript, like a longshoreman dropping his load.

"There," he said. "I have brought you *Under Fire.*"

"What is it?" my father asked.

"It is a book on the war," replied Barbusse. "It has been refused by all the newspapers in Paris. They have treated me as a defeatist.' I have used the few days of my ve in fruitlessly walking the streets. In an hour I return to the front. You are my last hope. They tell me that you have founded a newspaper to tell the truth. Do you wish my *Under Fire* then?"

Barbusse was at that time a little known journalist. My father looked at him for a long time. He was a discoverer of men. He saw that he had before him a real man.

"So you have spoken the truth?" he said, "We will listen."

"I tell of the life of the soldiers in the trenches and of their death. The others speak of their 'glory,' of the pleasure which young men have in dying for Civilization and What is Right, I speak of what I have seen, of that which I have come up against, of the dirt, the lice, the blood and the filth, of youngsters who call for their mothers during hours of agony caught on barbed wire. I speak of the brutal savagery of the war."

"I see," said my father.

He opened the book at random and read two or three pages. For a long time there was a great silence. Barbusse was seated all doubled up, his elbows cutting his knees, his head leaning forward. I scarcely dared move. You could hear a fly buzzing. Suddenly my father gave a long whistle and raised his head.

"Barbusse," he said in a deep voice, "I think that you have written the book I am waiting for, that all France is waiting for. Without reading further, I can say immediately that *Under Fire* will appear in L'Oeuvre."

Barbusse got up with a bound. Without a word he clasped my father's hand violently. He was too moved to speak. Neither was father able to say anything further. The two men, with hands clasped, stood looking at each other. Then Barbusse turned and without a word went out of the room.

The reception of *Under Fire* was amazing. Never had a newspaper known such a success. In the trenches the soldiers fought over copies of L'Oeuvre in which the story was running. For the first time their feelings were at last expressed, by one of themselves, with a powerful realism and a dramatic restraint. It was written in a language raw and full of taste—their language.

But this was certain to be opposed by the censor and the authorities. The officers forbade the reading of L'Oeuvre. The police seized numbers of it in the kiosks and the censors canvassed the army. In the middle of the large white spaces in each number, set aside by the scissors of Anastasia (which was what the censor was called), my father printed a large picture of the beard of M. Gautier, the chief of censorship. It was in the end a small war where cleverness, intelligence and talent fought for peace.

In several days Barbusse became famous. His novel, which soon appeared in book form, went through enormous editions. And I at the Versailles Lycee, hid under my mattress a copy of *Under Fire* with a book by Romain Rolland, and these I read in secret. It was with these two books that I entered into life, that I commenced to have a conscious understanding of things. And like me how many young girls, how many young boys of France!

Alas, I arrived in Moscow too late to see Barbusse alive for the last time. As I got off the train I learned that he had died.

The first day of my first visit to the U.S.S.R., the first thing that I saw was the face of Henri Barbusse. In 1916 he opened the doors of life to me; in 1935 I found him on the threshold of the Soviet Union. For the second time he opened to me the doors of a new life. Dead? No, not dead, but living in us.

And while I looked with sadness on his prophet's burning face, now cold, while there rages outside, like a human storm, the tide of International Young Communists, it seems to me in truth that we, the young people, have come to receive the word of command from the great one who has passed on.

We are taking up his work.

I Met a Man

I met a man the other day,
Gave him a lift—driving out his way.
He said:
(His hair was red)
"A man might's well be dead
As have no work to do."
(His eyes were soft bewildered blue;
His hands had bands of hard sinew.)
"God damn!" he cried,
"The world's cock-eyed!
Be jigged if they're not honing for
Another stinking bloody war!"
I stopped before his neat house door.
"There's so much in this world needs
mending;
Many fine jobs a man might be tending—
Roads, and waterworks, steelrail bending...
See that nice little bus you've got?
Well, I used to forge those frames by the
lot;
Can work a machinetool on the dot!"
(There was a break in his right shoe.)
"Thanks for the ride," he said; "thank
you."

IRVING FINEMAN.

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LANDSCAPE — *George Picken*

Macaroni for Africa

GRACE FLANDRAU

THERE is something people are saying nowadays and writing in articles for newspapers and magazines. Especially Mr. Brisbane is saying it. And that is how glad well-wishers of the Ethiopians should be that their country has the chance of becoming a European colony so that there will no longer be any slavery, hunger or injustice. And when I read that I am surprised, because in 1927 and '28 I spent a good many months in Central Africa, in places that are already the colonies of various European nations.

There was to begin with Porte Gentil in the French Gabun. It was night and the white glare of our searchlights picked up the throngs of small craft come out from shore. There were gay shouts, greetings, commands, the clatter of cargo loaded and unloaded and through it all, soft and clear, there was the clink of chains. Up out of the darkness of the sea they came in hundreds—young men and old, nearly naked, with long chains around their necks fastening them together in pairs. They were being transferred to another part of the French Congo.

It was Matadi, the prinicpal port of the Belgian Congo. We sat, at high noon, in the waiting room of the local official who would, when he finished his lunch and the siesta that followed it, inspect our passports. It was dim and cool, the Venetian shades were lowered, the tiles dampened, the wicker chairs deep and easy. Only the open door was a blaze of intolerable sunlight. And before it black men, chained together by neck and ankle, walked slowly back and forth. They carried rocks on their heads and were building something or other for the official's garden. In the silence was only the soft frivolous tinkle of their chains.

It was night on the Congo River. The boat lay tied up to the breast of the forest and for hours chained men passed up and down the gang plank carrying wood for the next day's run. It was Stanleyville, a thousand miles up the great river. It was Buta, our last outpost on the new motor road. It was this or that small military post far from all roads in the depth of the Ituri forest and always, wherever we went, there were chained men.

"Who are they?" we asked. "What have they done?"

"Well, for the most part they have failed to pay their taxes," the voice of authority replied.

Taxes! It would seem that those naked men, barefoot, bareheaded, wearing only a loin cloth made of tree bark, were as denuded of taxable property as the forest animals themselves.

Nor are the men in chains the only slaves of empire throughout the length and breadth of colonial Africa—and all of Africa is colonial except Ethiopia and Liberia. Imperial conquest is expensive, it costs even more in money than it does in blood. And money, if not blood, can be repaid, must be repaid. It must be repaid out of the mines and forests for possession of which these lands were conquered and the tropical products which are raised for export. And it is the conquered people who must do the work. They must take out the minerals, cut down the trees, plant the coffee and cotton, build the railroads and highways over which these goods are to be taken to the sea. They must do this work for nearly nothing if the necessary profit is to be made. But of course, when men are drafted there is never much trouble about wages.

So throughout equatorial Africa—which

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of Africa I know, they are collected taken from their forest villages, formed to work gangs and sent to whatever part of the colony a railroad, motor road, dock or other public work is going forward. As a result of conditions to which they are not accustomed, to the forced labor to which they are compelled, they die in hundreds and thousands. Usually they have no clothing, no blankets to protect themselves from the sudden, piercing chill of the moisture-laden equatorial night. Contrary too, from general opinion, they have not the habit of exposing themselves to the midday sun. In their villages they sleep through the burning noon hours under thatched shelters and too, most of their work—tending plantain groves and manioc fields—is done in the shade. Also, they have acquired no immunity against many diseases and the epidemics that sweep these work camps are particularly fatal. But most of all, what they suffer and die from, is the insufficiency of food.

WORRIED colonial officials complain to you bitterly of the fact that they die. They need more man power, they complain, they must have it—a hundred colonial projects hang fire through lack of men and yet—most inconsiderately they die. My diary of that time is filled with conversations of this kind. Here is an interview with the acting-governor-general of the Belgian Congo in his office residence at Leopoldville.

"If only these people could get enough to eat each day," he says, "the mortality would be much less. They are so undernourished they cannot resist disease. We need to raise more food to be consumed here, instead of merely raising tropical products for export. We can't have people dying. We've got to have man power. . . ." This man was not a monster, he was not lacking in decency and pity, he was merely a cog in the imperial machine that once started has got to be kept going. No home government is going to pour money indefinitely into a venture without getting some back. It can't. After all, it has its taxpayers who will not stand for it. And so the local administrators are pretty much on the spot.

Often as we motored over the half-finished roads into the great forest the work gangs threw down their tools, the axes and shovels with which they had been working on the road and rushed after us, running as fast and as long as their strength permitted, stretching out their hands, making motions toward their mouths.

"What do they want?" we asked our interpreter the first time we saw them.

"They want food," he replied. "They think you have food with you and will give them some."

When we left the motor roads and travelled by safari we could procure no food for our porters except green bananas, and night after night, week after week they fed on nothing else, except when we could force a native to sell us a skinny goat—one poor goat for two hundred hungry men—and which the owner needed badly for his own family. The needs of empire have dislocated their economy, their habits and semi-starvation is the result.

And what else does white conquest bring to the Africans? Listen to Brown speaking. Brown is the employe of a great English company in the Congo. "They've passed a darn fool law," he says, "that niggers can only be beaten by the proper authorities! So when I want a man licked I have to send him round to the commissioner. But I must say he does a good job. He gives him all I ask. Oh, sometimes I lace into one myself and nobody says anything. God, if you didn't beat 'em you wouldn't get anything done at all. They ought all to be boiled to make ink, I say."

And here is Smith head of a palm-oil firm in Kinshasa: "Of course, blacks aren't allowed to walk on the sidewalks. I should hope not. You can't encourage these natives, they've got to be kept in their place."

Mackaques, Portuguese word for monkey, is a favorite name the Belgians have for them. *Une masse de boue infecte*—a mass of infected mud—is what an old West Coast timber cruiser calls them. Keep them off the sidewalks, out of the hotels, cafes, trains—the Jim-Crow law of the darkest part of our dark South is nothing to the personal attitude of the whites toward Africans in their own land of Africa. Except indeed, in the French Congo. And even there they are grievously starved, overworked, abused.

It is true that legally in most colonies they can only be beaten "by the proper authorities." But what about that? What about these authorities we saw in every little town and outpost throughout Equatorial Africa? Men half crazy with heat, quinine, fever, the difficulty of dealing with a race so utterly different in nature and purpose but who must be bent to the incomprehensible needs of white imperialism? What about the heavy rhino whips hanging so ready to hand of every one of these exasperated, jittery, unfortunate white tools of empire?

THERE was the young missionary priest at Titule. It is true he is lonely, homesick, afraid. He is afraid of Africa, of the forest, of the wild animals, but most of all, of the black bodies left broken and bleeding, he says, after the passing of a certain white official called by the natives "the leopard."

I took one of our boys to an official in Stanleyville. I wanted to get him permission to return down the river. But the official for some reason, did not like this boy. He fairly trembled with exasperation at the mere sight of him. And every question he asked was accompanied by a blow driven into the face of the black. The boy, of course, dared not lift a hand in defense

Another morning I stood by the rail of the little steamer on the remote upper Congo watching officers from a small military outpost coming aboard. A sickly-looking black, his dark skin turned almost grey with disease, carried a heavy trunk on his head. As he reaches the landing he stumbles, drops the trunk. The fist of the burly Belgian officer smashes into his face and sends him reeling across the path He falls, lies motionless, carefully ignored by the other blacks who pass. After a long time he stirs, becomes violently sick and when the vomiting is over crawls away to lie in the shade. Incidents I could multiply by almost every day we spent in colonial Africa.

It is true of course, that a certain kind of slavery, a certain amount of hunger, existed in these lands before they were conquered. But if we are only exchanging one form of injustice for a far worse one, let us at least know the truth. And when they tell us how splendid it is for the Ethiopians that they are to join the happy family of European controlled colonies and enjoy the benefits of our benevolent civilization—to wear shoes and, as Mr. Arthur Brisbane tells us, eat all the good Italian macaroni they want, I say: Go to Africa, Mr. Brisbane, go to the Belgian, French, English, Spanish, Portugese possessions, listen to the clink of chains, the sound of blows; observe the hunger, the hopeless peonage, the despair and humiliation of the blacks. Please go, those of you who write about bringing imperial benefits to Ethiopia.

Perspective

H. H. LEWIS

With a battlement austere
Looming daily manifest,
High and sheer,
Firmly dear
To the knight in armor dressed—
Reared the baron's feudal pile
Flaunting shadow for a mile . . .

Past the epoch rumbled,
And the huge oppressive tower
Moulds beneath the present hour.
Down the castle tumbled:
Time in haste,
Much waste;

Deeper, deeper it will go,
Not a particle to show . . .

Thus the prison yet today,
Thus the church not far away
(Where that utmost Shadow lay),
Doomed by Lenin's dreaming smile,
Will be
Nothing
After
While . . .

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Rain in Virginia

LESTER J. COHEN

RAIN in Virginia—She watched him strike out down the rain-and-wind-swept road, her old eyes and thin wisps of scrawny hair following him, following Young Virginia as he strides proudly along in the rain in his new, squeaking, high-laced boots. The rain comes down fresh and dazzling and clear, glinting on young shoots, making on them rounded jewels to be held toward the sky. *Don't worry, Mom,* Young Virginia had said, *I'll be getting a job soon. Soon. It's only April.*

April is life and life is work and work starts in youth, in April. Cool rain dripping in a shaft of sudden, surprising sunlight. Even the water that leaks into squeaking shoes is something: refreshing, cooling, pleasant. In the spring, in April.

The girl's soft hands ran gently through his hair, conveying to him something of their quiet trepidation: in their sudden hesitancy, in their quick frenzied caressing. *Don't go, Bobby, don't go. You'll get something here yet. Don't go.* But Young Virginia, April, stretches eagerly and is impatient to be off. *There's nothing here, Margy. There's more chance outside.* A sudden pause in youth, a cessation of the rain, a stopping, a quick glimpse of clear sun and eyes. *I'll always love you, Margy.—And I you, Bobby.* Then it is raining again in Virginia.

Tennessee Is Cheap—The broad sun comes up like a red-hot wafer over the Tennessee landscape. May in Bristol, in Tennessee. Automobile license plates have changed from gray to green, from Virginia to Tennessee. Young Virginia leans against a fire-alarm box, a thin cigarette pressed between full lips, eager eyes watching Tennessee pass in parade: Tennessee in a Panama hat and mopping Tennessee's red face with a silk handkerchief; Tennessee in a cheap calico dress with bundles under arms; Tennessee with a heavy belly protruding from under a thick, imitation gold watch chain. Young Virginia hesitates, then flicks the cigarette in the gutter with a little twist of the wrist.

Wash your car, mister? A quarter to wash your car?

Tennessee in a straw hat walks on. Tennessee is cheap. *Don't worry, Mom; don't worry, Margy, I'll be getting a job soon.* But Tennessee is cheap, Tennessee is too cheap, whether in a Panama, or a calico dress, or with a fat belly, Tennessee is cheap. Tennessee has a lot of taxes and taxes make people poor and poverty makes them cheap. But God controls the rivers, and the trees, and the air, He doesn't levy any tax on any of His things.

Youth has much energy but tires quickly. Youth must rest, must refresh itself. That is why God put the rivers here: so youth can refresh itself. In the water, in the cool water, churning up the mud beneath with tired weary feet. *This is the life.* Swim. Float. Spread the arms, trail the feet, duck; up again spluttering with delight, spitting water joyously. Over on youth's back, facing the warm Tennessee sun lazily, happily, hopefully. *Tommorow . . . tomorrow there'll be a job. . . .* Tomorrow. When the May sun rises again on the Tennessee landscape. *All God's chillun. . . . All God's chillun. . . .* Tomorrow. Youth is youth until it begins to think of yesterday. Tonight the sun sets on Tennessee, on cheap Tennessee with Panama hats, and calico dresses, and fat bellies, and silk handkerchiefs. . . .

Birmingham Says Welcome to Birmingham—The old Negro sitting on the ramshackle porch shaded his eyes as he watched the approaching figure. Now and again he would remove his pipe with his old black fingers and gaze at the thin blue spiral of smoke that coiled above him. With half an eye he watched the figure as it came through the fields, and then, finally, through the broken gate. The old Negro watched, listening to Young Virginia as he came up the walk, as he spoke.

The old Negro shook his head. *Go 'way, white boy. Don' need no wood chopped today.*

Once again the Negro on the porch shaded his eyes as he watched Young Virginia tramp back across the fields. Once again he placed the battered pipe in his mouth and sucked on it, his watery, red-clotted eyes closing lazily against the slanting sun.

Alabama is broke, stone broke. Even the roads tell it: they are hard, and pebbly, and warped: washboards. Even the hot sun tells of the hard-baked poverty of Alabama.

Sometimes on a back road peaches hanging on trees. Then Young Virginia wading across a ditch, wriggling under a fence. Hot Alabama peaches, warm and fuzzy outside, inside warmer, and soft and sickening besides: but food.

Birmingham says *Welcome to Birmingham.* Birmingham says I have a job for you, Virginia.

Need a strong boy, mister?
Carry your bags, lady?
Watch your car?
Sweep your walk?

Birmingham, Alabama, is poor inside too, like the outside, like the old Negro, like the roads. It's June that does it. Birmingham in June is too hot, too uncomfortable. The heat rises and wraps itself around your neck like stifling flannel swathings; it takes flesh and makes it smell.

Alabama cannot hear Young Virginia saying—*a dime for coffee and sinkers, mister?* Alabama tries hard not to hear what Young Virginia says. Alabama is hard, and deaf and poor, too.

Birmingham says *Goodby—Hurry Back.* To what? To Birmingham in June? To the smell of hot flesh? To an old Negro sitting on a broken porch? To the sun?

Mississippi is a bread box—The bread box stood on a raised ledge outside the general store. In the cool distance purple dawn clouds had begun to gather. From beyond the bend down the road came the sudden put-put of a motor, and after that, a few seconds later, the sudden onrushing of glaring headlights tearing around the bend and coming quickly upon the town and then just as quickly away again, leaving in its wake, through the raised dust, its tail light like a live glowing cigarette end, all at once disappearing completely as though stepped on by a angry foot, disappearing angrily in the dark.

Watching the car, Young Virginia vaguely remembers something he has learned a long time ago. The brain must have food, the learning says, when it—when it—. And again. The brain must have food. When the stomach is empty—when the stomach empty. . . . But Young Virginia's empty stomach cannot tell his brain the rest of this learning.

Staring down the road. Young Virginia sits on the empty bread box waiting for the bread truck to arrive. Staring down the road. There is a remote possibility that there might be some hard bread or rolls left over. There is a possibility. . . .

A cloud of dust catapults the truck into the town; screeching brakes halt its progress in front of where Young Virginia sits waiting. Calloused hands drop their load of fresh bread and rolls into the box; quick scramble back to the car; Young Virginia leans against the wall and watches the car disappear. Inside the box are now the smelling, well-baked bread and rolls. Young Virginia thinks, hesitates, leans harder against the wall, still thinking, hesitating. . . . Slowly the sun comes red-eyed over the town. Young Virginia still waits, still hesitates. Finally, slowly, surreptitiously, he allows his wet hand to move over to the open latch of the box; eagerly then his frightened fingers raise the lid, the clean smell of baked dough brings a torture to his nostrils.

Suddenly Young Virginia thinks of something. He is more than frightened now. It is the first time that he ever—that

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.t hunger overcomes all scruples
nds go into the box.

.nere a rooster crows thinly. A
appears suddenly from around the
.ier of the house and jumps onto the
.dge where the bread box rests. Quickly Young Virginia snaps the lid shut. He waits. The kitten frisks about his legs, pulling on strands of cotton, playing with the lace of his boots. Inside the house there is a steady rustling movement of awaking. Outside again Young Virginia is walking rapidly down the road, hands empty, pockets empty, stomach empty, his hunger swallowed by something greater than hunger, his hunger swallowed by fear, by fear in a small town, in Mississippi, in July.

Spat! Damn you! Spat!—Take it easy, Kid. What are you trying to do to me?

O. K. sister. He moved himself across the bed. *Sorry. Let me have that bottle.*

Young Virginia's dirty, grimy hands stretching across for the bottle. Hard-bellied and hard-gutted, this Young Virginia. Thinking now no longer in terms of thought, thinking only in feeling: hunger, and thirst, and passion for the soft flesh of woman. Remembering as from a great distance, *Don't worry, Mom; don't worry, Margy. I'll be getting a job soon.*

Walk along Canal Street in New Orleans, in August, under the hot glare of street lights, sweating, thirsty, tired, stopping men, talking to them, trying to convince them for the sake of the dimes that the girls give you for every man you send them. For the dime and also because sometimes you get something from them you can't buy for a dime. Something that you get sometimes when business is bad and the girls see you looking at them with that look in your eyes, looking at them with that look of something in your eyes.

Take it easy, Kid. What would your mother say if she knew what you were doing?

What would *your* mother say if she knew what *you* were doing? Young Virginia thinks wordlessly. Sullenly, thickly, he answers the woman: *M' mother's dead. Been dead f' years. . . .*

Young Virginia's hands are on the bottle again. Liquid heat slithering down inside a young, grimy throat. All God's chillun. . . . All God's chillun. . . .

New Orleans at night, in August. Whores in dull, faded pajamas and loose-hanging kimonas, with underneath sagging, flabby, half-exposed breasts. New Orleans in August, in the stifling, withering heat. Spat! Pimping for broken-down whores. Spat! Hard-bellied now. Spat! Miami in the winter, Paris in the fall. . . . All God's chillun. . . . Spat! Spat! New Orleans in the summer, in the heat, in August . . . walking, pimping, now no longer waiting for anything except Spat! . . . Spat! Walking, pimping, asking . . . walking . . . in the summer . . . in the heat . . . walking . . . in the heat, in August . . . all the way . . . from Virginia . . . in the rain. . . .

John Reed and the Old Masses

GRANVILLE HICKS

During 1916, John Reed was engaged in many activities, not all of which were connected with the war. In abridging this chapter for magazine publication, it has been necessary to omit certain sections, such as that dealing with Reed's poetry, and to condense others, such as those describing his meeting with Louise Bryant, the founding of the Provincetown Players and his operation. G. H.

AFTER his return from the Eastern Front, John Reed planned to visit his mother in Portland, but first he had to finish his articles for The Metropolitan. While he was staying in New York, in the latter weeks of November, 1915, he gave two lectures. The first was before the Harvard Club and many of his college acquaint-
; came to hear him. Reed, despite the
:sses he had had at Harvard, had been
)pular with many of the students and
cially with the little group of aristocrats.
.e of these men, having disliked Reed in
.llege, came to his lecture prepared to scoff. They were skeptical of his stories, the tales of innumerable arrests, the flight from Constantinople, the sights of the battlefields. As he sensed the hostility of his listeners, he became arrogant, deliberately exaggerating the stories in order to shock these smug stay-at-homes. And afterwards, realizing that he had not been taken seriously, had not convinced anyone of the truth about the war, e was unhappy.

It was different when he went to speak to the prisoners at Sing Sing. Reed's father had been a close friend of Thomas Mott Osborne, the warden, and Reed himself had followed with warm approval Osborne's attempts at prison reform. He had dinner with the warden and with Spencer Miller and he fascinated them with his account of his adventures. When he was introduced to the audience in the crowded chapel, he began, with complete naturalness, "Hello, fellows," and instantly there was applause. He talked a little about his own experiences in American and European jails and then went on to speak of the labor movement and the peace movement as phases of the struggle for freedom. He spoke exactly as if he were talking to a group of workers in a labor-union hall and there was no doubt that he felt more at home than he had at the Harvard Club. When he finished, there was cheering such as Osborne and Miller had seldom heard.

While he was in Portland, he met and fell in love with Louise Bryant, who joined him in New York soon after his return. Despite this new preoccupation and despite the fact that he was working very hard, for the demand for his articles and stories was strong, he found time for lecturing. At the Labor Forum he not only denounced Theodore Roosevelt and the other advocates of preparedness, but urged the workers to refuse to fight and said, in the course of the question period, that a civil war would be necessary to restore the government of the United States from the plutocracy to the people. At Columbia, speaking before the Social Study Club, he told the students that they need not expect the war to disgust men with fighting; on the contrary, it would foster the habit of killing.

Because he recognized the strength of the martial spirit, he found the emotional pacifism of many of his friends unrealistic and ineffectual and at the Intercollegiate Socialist Society he ventured the suggestion, to the horror of the pacifists, that the workers should arm. "A drilled nation," he said, "in the power of the capitalist class is dangerous, but a drilled nation in the hands of the workers would be interesting. For instance, if the men employed in the munitions factories should take it into their heads to train a little now and then, if they should familiarize themselves with guns, isn't there just a chance that their demands for better conditions would be listened to with somewhat more attention and respect?" He was beginning to feel that the question was not whether force should be used but who should use it.

Suddenly the Mexican issue re-emerged. On January 10, nineteen employes of an American mining company were shot in Mexico. Immediately the interventionists were clamoring at Washington. "California and Texas were part of Mexico once," William Randolph Hearst wrote. "What has been done in California and Texas by the United States can be done all the way down to the southern bank of the Panama Canal and beyond. And if this country really wanted to do what would be for the best

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interests of civilization, the pacifying, prosperity-giving influence of the United States would be extended south to include both sides of the great canal."

Reed gave an interview to Robert Mountsier, which was published in many papers throughout the country. He did not dwell on the moral issues but described the cost of intervention. "Every Mexican," he said, "of whatever faction, will take up arms against the hated gringo. Even the women and children will join in the fighting." He spoke of the courage of the Mexicans, their resourcefulness in guerilla warfare, the possibilities of tropical disease and the certainty of death for thousands of American soldiers.

Two months later came the attack of Villa's men on Columbus, New Mexico, with the death of nine civilians and eight American troopers. While Pershing prepared to pursue Villa, Reed gave another interview and wrote a syndicated article. Once more he spoke of the dangers of intervention and this time he paid tribute as well to Villa's personal qualities. He had been convinced, to his regret, that Villa was not the social idealist he had assumed, but he still admired him. "I don't care if he is only a bandit," he told John Kenneth Turner, after reading Turner's analysis of Villa's course of self-aggrandizement; "I like him just the same." He thought a little of going to Mexico to report Pershing's expedition from Villa's side.

IN the meantime he had an assignment from Collier's to go to Florida to interview William Jennings Bryan. Much of what he saw on the way offended him. "The bloated silly people on this ridiculous private rich man's train," he wrote Louise Bryant, "throw pennies and dimes and quarters to be scrambled for by the Negroes whenever we stop at a station. Lord, how the white folks scream with laughter to see the coons fight each other, gouge each other's eyes, get bleeding lips, scrambling over the money. Why don't you suggest to Floyd Dell that some one draw a cartoon about it for The Masses? All the whites in this section look mean and cruel and vain. Have you ever seen Jim Crow cars, colored waiting rooms in stations, etc.? I have seen them before, so they don't shock me so much as they did. Just make me feel sick. I hate the South."

Reed joined Bryan at Palatka and the Great Commoner, remembering their previous meeting, welcomed him cordially and gave him a ticket to his lecture that night. The next morning they went together up The St. John River, with Bryan addressing the natives at each landing. In his private conversation, as in his public addresses, the former Secretary of State employed pompous platitudes and Reed took pleasure in drawing him out. He was opposed to war, but, asked what he would do if his country were fighting for an unjust cause, he said tht he could not answer hypothetical questions. He denounced trusts but praised capitalism: "Competition," he said, "is absolutely necessary to commercial life, just as the air we breathe is necessary to physical life."

He spoke eloquently about religion and Reed led him from religion to morality and from morality, by way of censorship, to art. When Reed said that he personally opposed censorship of any kind, Bryan declared in amazement, "Well, I never met anyone before who didn't believe that decency should be preserved." Reed went on to maintain that the human body was beautiful and Bryan crushingly remarked, "I suppose you would advocate people's going naked on the street." When Reed cheerfully said, "Why not?" Bryan frowned and announced, "We won't discuss that subject any more."

In writing his account of the interview, Reed did not hesitate to emphasize Bryan's fatuousness, but at the same time he paid tribute to his humanitarianism. "After all," he wrote, "whatever is said, Bryan has always been on the side of democracy. Remember that he was talking popular government twenty years ago and getting called 'anarchist' for it; remember that he advocated such things as the income tax, the popular election of senators, railroad regulation, low tariff, the destruction of private monopoly and the initiative and referendum when such things were considered the dreams of an idiot; and remember that he is not yet done." In recalling Bryan's service to reform, Reed was making clear that, though he had little respect for the man, his criticisms were not to be identified with those of the reactionaries and war-mongers, who were trying in their ridicule of Bryan to discredit every effort to regulate private industry or preserve peace.

When Reed submitted his record of the interview, Bryan deleted most of the discussion of censorship on the ground that art was a field in which he had no expert knowledge. Otherwise he accepted Reed's report as correct. In returning the notes, he wrote: "If you will pardon my personal interest in you, I will enclose an order on my publishers for *The Prince of Peace*. I feel that in maturer years you will give more consideration to the faith in which you were reared and which is a source of strength as well as a consolation to so many millions."

IT was not difficult for Reed to secure magazine assignments such as the interview with Bryan, despite his reputation as a radical. In the spring of 1916, though the retreat from the new freedom was under way, a touch of radicalism was still something of an asset to a competent journalist. He was given an inkling of how wealth could be secured when a prominent industrialist with an eye on the presidency approached him and asked him to become his publicity manager. The industrialist had calculated the value of Reed's following among the liberals and radicals as well as his skill as a journalist and he was willing to pay for both. It was an excellent chance to sell out and many of Reed's Dutch Treat friends would have told him he was a fool to refuse.

The problem of integrity, however, was easy; Reed did not have to think twice before rejecting the steel magnate's offer. But the whole problem of his future as a writer was complicated. Robert Rogers told him that, good as his journalism was, it only expressed a small part of his nature. It was time, Rogers said, for a novel or a long poem. Reed knew Rogers was right and he was constantly making notes and outlines for a novel, but he never got beyond the drafting of plans or the writing of a few tentative pages. There seemed to him to be something final about a novel and he was not ready for finality. Not only was the world changing too rapidly; he felt that, if he began a novel, he would be a different person when he finished it. If he marked time by continuing with articles and doing occasional short stories that were deliberate pot-boilers, it was because he felt that he was not ready to pour his whole nature into a sustained effort.

Throughout the spring of 1916, the idea persisted that it was not in the novel, not in poetry, that he could find expression, but in the drama. Writing *Enter Dibble* had been fun, but he was ready to admit that the future of the theater did not lie with such plays. What kept recurring to him was the possibility of building upon his experience with the Paterson pageant. He wanted to create a theater of the working class Plans to give plays for the workers, though he was inerested in these, were not enough. Hiram Moderwell, Leroy Scott and oth had conceived a theater that would produ at popular prices, plays that workers wou want or ought to want to see. Reed had bolder scheme: labor groups would drama tize the principal events in their lives, jus as the Paterson workers had dramatized their strike. The idea grew: the best drama tizations from all over the country woul be presented once a year, on May Day, i New York. Reed's friends caught his e thusiasm and money for initial expenses wa quickly raised, but he became absorbed i other things and the plan collapsed.

Busy as he was, he never neglected Th Masses and when he had something that h really wanted to say, it was usually in Th Masses that he said it. Nothing disturbe him more in the spring of 1916 than th growth of the preparedness movement. H watched with anger and alarm the foundin of the National Security League, Wood and Roosevelt's attempts to create a priva army, the opening of the business men's can at Plattsburg and the spread of milita training in the colleges. The news th Samuel Gompers had joined Howard Coff Ralph Easley and Hudson Maxim in wo ing out details for industrial mobiliz infuriated him. The preparedness p with its Wall Street sections, its

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YOUNG MEN IN A SHELLHOLE

George Picken.

bloodthirsty society women and its blatant ners, made him pound on the furniture t shout with disgust. This was something t had to be written about and he wrote out it in The Masses.

Although "At the Throat of the Repub-c," which appeared in the July issue, began ith some colorful vituperation of the mili-ists, especially Theodore Roosevelt, it was the most part straightforward exposition, ndling facts with vicious precision. Reed owed that the National Security League s dominated by Hudson Maxim, president the Maxim Munitions Corporation and at among its directors were representatives United States Steel and Westinghouse lectric. He showed that the Navy League d as directors and officers J. P. Morgan, lward Stotesbury of the Morgan interests d the Baldwin Locomotive Works, Robert con and Henry Frick of United States el, George R. Sheldon of Bethlehem Steel W. A. Clark, the copper king. He ted out that The Metropolitan, in which sevelt advocated preparedness, was owned Harry Payne Whitney, a Morgan man a founder of the Navy League. He d the various interlocking directorates Morgan and Rockefeller interests and that they dominated both the pre-societies and the newly formed American International Corporation, organized for the exploitation of backward countries. He touched briefly on the conditions in the industries owned by these gentlemen in America and then he quoted Elihu Root: "The principles of American liberty stand in need of a renewed devotion on the part of the American people. We have forgotten that in our vast material prosperity. We have grown so rich, we have lived in ease and comfort and peace so long, that we have forgotten to what we owe these agreeable instances of life." Reed commented: "The workingman has not forgotten. He knows to whom he owes 'these agreeable instances of life.' He will do well to realize that his enemy is not Germany, nor Japan; his enemy is that two percent of the people of the United States who own sixty percent of the national wealth, that band of unscrupulous 'patriots' who have already robbed him of all he has, and are now planning to make a soldier out of him to defend their loot. We advocate that the workingman prepare himself against that enemy. That is our preparedness."

REED wanted to write novels and poems, wanted to found a workers' theater, wanted to write for The Masses, wanted to fight against war, wanted to get the most out of New York City for himself and for Louise Bryant. But there were two problems that he could not forget: money and health. Money meant primarily work for The Metropolitan and incidentally articles and stories for other paying magazines. It was an unpleasant problem, but not a very difficult one to solve; the magazines wanted what he wrote and it took a relatively small part of his energy to earn enough for his own needs and for the assistance of his mother. Health had become a more serious matter. His kidney periodically bothered him and his doctor was talking about an operation. In any case, the doctor said, he must have a rest and he and Louise Bryant went to Provincetown.

They arrived at the end of May and early in June he had to leave to attend the Republican, Democratic and Progressive conventions for The Metropolitan. In New York the doctors told Reed that he was better and he set out for Chicago. He saw Hughes nominated and witnessed the collapse of the Progressive convention. Then he went to Detroit for an interview with Henry Ford, with whom he spent part of two days. After observing the renomination of Wilson at St. Louis, he returned to Detroit, apparently to try to persuade Ford to finance a newspaper devoted to the cause of peace. The attempt failed, though for a little while Reed was swept off his feet by a great ambition and a great hope.

In the division of the fruits of the trip, The Masses once more got the better of The Metropolitan. "The National Circus," which appeared in The Metropolitan for September, with cartoons by Art Young, was a perfunctory piece of reporting that conveyed little to the reader except the author's boredom and his sense of the futility of the whole performance. But for The Masses Reed told the story of Roosevelt's betrayal of the Progressives. He began by stating the case against Roosevelt and he stated it with some venom: "We were not fooled by the Colonel's brand of patriotism. Neither were the munitions makers and the money trust; the Colonel was working for their benefit, so they backed him." For the Colonel he had only contempt, but, remembering his father, he sympathized with the Progressives. They were not intelligent radicals, he knew; they were "common, ordinary, unenlightened people, the backwoods idealists." But they were loyal to their ideals and they had an almost religious faith in Teddy. When he refused the nomination, they wandered around as if dazed and more than one of them wept. Although, like other Socialists, Reed had predicted that this would happen and had laughed at these men for their devotion to a person and to such a person as Theodore Roosevelt, he was moved to admiration and sorrow.

But on the whole, Reed's visit to Ford was more significant to him than anything that happened at the conventions. He liked Ford, the audacity with which he talked of

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millions of cars, the common sense with which he disposed of complicated problems, the streak of romanticism that had resulted in the Peace Ship. The efficient organization of production in the Ford plants overwhelmed Reed's imagination. He had a vision of all this power in the hands of the workers and he convinced himself that the vision was shared by Henry Ford. Clutching at the fact that other industrialists and financiers criticized Ford, he made himself believe that here was a genuine revolutionary. The paternalism in Ford's treatment of his employes irritated him, but he argued that it was only a phase in the creation of an industrial democracy. Ford was so powerful and seemed so benevolent and the working class was so docile, that for a brief period, Reed was ready to put his faith in a utopia created by kindly capitalists.

HIS enthusiasm did not survive the failure of his plan of interesting Ford in a newspaper, but that was less because he made a conscious effort to analyze Ford's role in the capitalist system than because he had other things to think about. In particular, he had to make up his mind about Mexico. There was talk of enlarging the punitive expedition and John Wheeler of the Wheeler Syndicate wrote him, "It seems to me that this war will be a vehicle on which you would ride to a position in the literature of the country that would be above everybody else as a war correspondent." Carl Hovey told him, "You have the chance to be the one correspondent in this war." F. V. Ranck of The New York American wired: "Feel that you would be particularly effective. Wish you would decide to go. Don't believe you will be able to keep out of it once things really begin to break. Can't you give us definite answer?" But Reed steadily refused. He was tempted, of course, but there was the question of his health, the question of leaving Louise Bryant and especially the question of the kind of reporting that would be demanded of him. He strongly suspected that he would be required to glorify the American soldier in Mexico and that he could not do.

None of the newspaper executives could understand why he refused to go to either Europe or Mexico. His reputation was at its height. The Metropolitan Bulletin, a little paper sent to advertisers, published an article called "Insurgent Reed," describing his independence and courage and calling him the best descriptive writer in the world. The publication of *The War in Eastern Europe,* though the book had a small sale, brought excellent reviews, not only in the liberal and radical weeklies but also in the daily press. Most of the reviewers, including John Dos Passos, who reviewed it for The Harvard Monthly, spoke of the picturesqueness of the book, its unpretentiousness and its humor. A few, notably Floyd Dell in The Masses, saw in it more than colorful reporting; they found an understanding of human beings that had significance for the student of international affairs. All agreed that John Reed was as able a war correspondent as any in America.

And John Reed, instead of going off to see General Pershing catch Pancho Villa, stayed in Provincetown. The summer before, George Cram Cook and Susan Glaspell had produced two groups of one-act plays and they were eager to attempt further experiments. Reed's persistent interest in the theater flared into enthusiasm. Soon he was devoting as much time to the Provincetown Players as he was to his own writing. They took a shed on the end of a fishing wharf, cleaned it out and built a stage. The first bill consisted of Neith Boyce's *Winter Nights, Suppressed Desires,* by Cook and Glaspell, which had been given the preceding summer and Reed's *Freedom.* The theater was filled and Cook immediately started securing subscriptions for a summer season.

Freedom, which had been rejected by the Washington Square Players, was a good-humored satire of romanticism. It is a story of four prisoners, Poet, Romancer, Smith and Trusty. After years of plotting and working, the Poet and the Romancer are at last ready to escape. At first they persuade the Trusty to join them, but deciding that he has a place in prison and would have none outside, he chooses to stay. Then the Poet remembers that he has won his reputation as a prison poet and says, "For God's sake, how can I write about freedom when I'm free?" Romancer and Smith persist, but when Romancer discovers that the room has no bars and is on the ground floor, he declares that no man of honor would escape under such conditions. Smith says, "Well, the difference between you sapheads and me is that I want to get out and you just think you do. You're playing a little game where the rules are more important than who wins. I'm willing to grant that you have it on me as far as honor and patriotism and reputation go, but all I want is freedom." The others make so much noise in denouncing him as a coward and a traitor that the guards come. Romancer, Poet and Trusty unite in attacking Smith for attempting to escape and say that they tried to stop him. Smith has the last line: "There's not a word of truth in it! I was trying to break into a padded cell so I could be free!"

Except insofar as it served to mark the distinction between Reed's own kind of romanticism and the romantic poses of the pseudo-revolutionaries, the play was unimportant, though possibly it had as much significance as the others on the same bill. The only major dramatic talent, of course, that emerged that summer at Provincetown was Eugene O'Neill's. *Bound East for Cardiff* was produced on the second bill, with Reed in the cast and a little later Louise Bryant appeared in *Thirst.* Reed acted in several plays, including *The Game,* a morality play written by Louise Bryant and staged by the Zorachs, who provided an abstract setting and introduced a stylized type
also wrote a one-act play,
Quadrangle, in which he and Lou
and George Cram Cook took the
parts. It was another Shavian farce, a
lesque of the "triangle" plays of Broadw
with incidental comments on love and th
institution of marriage. It was written in
haste, to fit the needs of the Players an
Reed did not seek either to publish it or t
have it produced a second time.

The conviction grew in Reed that the Provincetown Players had importance for the theater and he was insistent, in the face of skepticism, that the experiment should be continued in New York. On September 5, a meeting was called, with Rogers in the chair and Reed, Cook and a few other enthusiasts won a majority of the members to their side. The next day a constitution was presented and adopted and plans were made for the first performances in the city.

Reed and Louise Bryant lingered on in Provincetown until the end of September. He was now negotiating with the editors of The Metropolitan with regard to a trip to China. Eager to have Reed in any land where there would be colorful scenes for him to describe, Whigham and Hovey approved the suggestion. But there was the question of his health. He was feeling stronger after his summer by the ocean, but the infection of his kidney was not cured.

REED found more and more difficulty in writing for The Metropolitan. The editors vetoed his suggestions, for they knew that the subjects he proposed, treated as he would treat them, would be dangerous. He tried his hand at short stories, but he ha no real talent for pot-boilers. Increasingly it seemed to him that the trip to China o fered the only possibility for continued wor with the magazine.

After his return from Provincetown t New York, he did secure one assignmer that pleased him. The New York Tribun sent him down to Bayonne to report th strike in the Standard Oil plants and he di an article for The Metropolitan as well. H described the strike as akin to those in t Colorado coal fields, the Michigan cop mines and the Youngstown steel works — desperate, unorganized revolt of oppresse workers. His gift for sharp portrayal re turned, now that he had a congenial theme and he depicted the conditions of the immi grants, the Rockefeller domination of th city, the victimization of the workers by th tradesmen, the law and the church, the prog ress of the strike and the use of violence b the police and the company's thugs. It wa the last article Reed wrote for The Metro politan and he showed once more that, wh his sympathies were aroused, he had no s periors in journlism. The fact that his syn pathies were always excited by the sufferin of workers meant that he was better as labor-reporter than as a war corresponde but capitalist journalism had little place

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s like Reed and the time was
n there would be no place at all.
e presidential election drew near,
came to feel that the only thing that
tered was to keep the United States out
f the war and that the only hope of doing
so was to re-elect Woodrow Wilson. In the
summer he had joined Albert Jay Nock,
Lincoln Steffens, Boardman Robinson and
others in addressing a letter to Hughes, ques-
tioning him about his views on Mexico, neu-
trality, trusts and the income tax. Now,
together with Henrietta Rodman, Franklin
Giddings, Carlton Hayes and John Dewey,
he signed an appeal to Socialists, asking them
to vote for Wilson. "Every protest vote is
a luxury dearly bought," the statement read.
"Its price is the risk of losing much social
justice already gained and blocking much
immediate progress." He became a member
of the group of writers that George Creel
organized to suport Wilson, a group that in-
cluded Steffens, Fred Howe, Zona Gale,
Hutchins Hapgood, George Cram Cook and
Susan Glaspell. In a widely-syndicated ar-
ticle, one of a series by members of this
group, he wrote: "I am for Wilson because,
in the most difficult situation any American
president since Lincoln has had to face, he
has dared to stand for the rights of weak
nations in refusing to invade Mexico; he has
unflinchingly advocated the settlement of in-
ternational disputes by peaceful means; he
has opposed the doctrine of militarism and
has warned the American people against
sinister influences at work to plunge them
into war; and in this dark day for liberalism
in the United States, he has declared himself
a liberal and proved it by the nomination of
Louis D. Brandeis and John H. Clarke to
he supreme court, by forcing the enactment
f the Clayton bill, the child labor bill and
he workmen's compensation act and by the
labor planks in the St. Louis platform."

Reed went on to attack the Republicans,
specially Roosevelt, "the arch-disciple of
rofessor Bernhardi, believer in war for its
wn sake, the leader of the munitions-
akers' party and a traitor to the people."
One may suppose that Reed supported Wil-
n chiefly in order to oppose the Republi-
as. Indeed, later, when he was a little
shamed of the position he had taken, he
aid, " I supported Wilson simply because
Wall Street was against him." It was iron-
cal, of course, that, at the moment when
Wilson was swiftly moving towards war,
Reed should support him as a peace-maker,
ut he was only one of the millions who
ere deceived and betrayed. The fact that
enson, the Socialist candidate, deserted his
arty six months later to support the war,
ay have made Reed feel less guilty for
ving supported Wilson.

A week after the election, Reed entered
hns Hopkins hospital. Prolonged and
nful examinations led to the conclusion
t an operation was necessary and on No-
ber 22, 1916, his left kidney was re-
d.

Correspondence

Some Bouquets

To The New Masses:

I'm not in the habit of writing letters to the paper, but this time there's no holding me. I mean to say that I've just finished the anti-fascist humorous edition of The New Masses and it's grand!—swell!—elegant! There's only one thing the matter with it. It only comes once a year.

New York City. H. Ashbrook.

To The New Masses:

Your Anti-Fascist Satirical Number is a wow! I have just spent the entire evening enjoying it gluttonously. You were right when you advertised it last week as an issue to be sent to friends.

I have a couple of other compliments to pass out too. First for the return of John Spivak's astonishing interviews. Next for John Strachey's dispatches —they are indispensable—and next for Granville Hicks' chapters on John Reed.

M. L. Lischer.

To The New Masses:

Permit me to compliment you on the issue of this date, the anti-fascist number. It is a wow, even if it does not quite attain the sparkle of Simplicissimus before the Fuehrer became persona grata to the venerable cipher. Even if Friedrich Nietzsche can hardly be rated as a good Marxian, it is a good thing, even for Marxians, to remember his dictum that nothing kills like laughter.

However, the principal purpose of this letter is to go your Mr. Robert Forsythe several better. I agree with him on the Marx Brothers and wish to include Eddie Cantor (though I too do not get as much kick out of him on the radio as I do in the talkies, where I see his google eyes), Ed Wynn, Jimmy Durante, Jack Benny and the Baron Muenchhausen. If all the Jews were to be taken out of this country, I would certainly wish to go wherever they go—and this without having taken a matrimonial vow.

Clinton, Ia. J. C. Menzel.

Defense of Story Magazine

To The New Masses:

In regard to Halper's review of *Some American People* in December 10 issue, I am wondering why he abruptly swings aside to take a nasty dig at Story magazine and spoil an otherwise excellent review.

Perhaps Story has printed scads of "introspective tales" to quote Halper, but what about "F O. B. 595," by George Corey; *Fascismo Californiaus* by R. A. Emberg; *Mrs. Kent* (in the December issue; do not recall the author's name) and a dozen similar stories in 1935?

To designate Story authors as simply stooges of E. J. O'Brien sounds like a personal grudge.

Story is definitely anti-fascist in policy. Many of its stories are clear cut in their revolutionary implications. Halper is giving the wrong impression to those not familiar with the magazine.

Let us have stories with social significance from whatever source—and I believe Story is doing its part, at least I know of no publication with its circulation that prints so many. If Whit Burnett and Martha Foley did no more than present the stories mentioned above, they've contributed to the awakening of America.

Berkeley, Calif. P. P.

Intimidation at May's

To The New Masses:

Most of the facts pertaining to the strike at May's Department Store on Fulton Street, Brooklyn, are well known, but one phase of the strike has not until now been revealed. I refer to the intimidation of those employes who have remained in the store.

The officials of May's have been calling meetings of the employes, instilling fear in them regarding their future if they join the strikers. They boast of the terrorism used by the police towards the strikers, how the girls on strike are beaten, clubbed, manhandled and finally jailed. The boss declared in a speech that all the girls on strike who are arrested are being fingerprinted and given a "record" like common "criminals." He told them that all the employers of Fulton Street Department Stores have united, and have pledged themselves never to employ a girl who went out on strike. He said that "spotters" had been hired to study the faces of all strikers, so that if a girl should get a job in another store under an assumed name, she will be very soon detected by the spotters and will be immediately fired. It will be impossible for a girl to hold a job, once she is "marked" as a striker. Such intimidation must be fought. I urge The New Masses to exert all its influence to help the brave girls of May's, now battling against terrific odds. Victor Hilton.

Two College Magazines

To The New Masses:

I think that your readers as well as your contributors and editors will be interested in knowing of two articles just published in magazines with which very few of them can be acquainted. I refer to the quarterly magazines issued by the students of two New York colleges for women: The Barnard Quarterly and the Hunter College Echo.

The New Massses comes in for a good deal of intelligent comment in both articles. Gertrude Steinberg, in the Hunter publication, makes a sound, if condensed, analysis of the *practical results* of the work of a number of important magazines. She appreciates that the New Masses has "helped considerably to circumvent the activities of Hitler's agents here." But her most interesting point is her conclusion after a comparison of the relative roles of The Nation and the New Masses:

"While The Nation employs only destructive criticism and stands for certain rights such as academic freedom and freedom of speech and press, The New Masses has a program of social change as an answer to the problems which it uncovered. . . . New Masses, therefore, emerges as the only publication which accomplishes the two aims essential to the modern magazine: direct, hard-hitting criticism of the basic ailments of society and a creative answer, equally basic in its grasp on reality."

Evelyn Lichtenberg (in the Barnard Quarterly) praises The New Masses for a number of things—among them, for the Nancy Bedford-Jones *My Father Is a Liar* and for The New Masses work in behalf of proletarian literature and the betterment of the plight of American students.

Josephine Wellington.

Letters in Brief

Because Congress convenes in January, the National Joint Action Committee for Genuine Social Insurance urges readers of The New Masses to write to their Representatives to support and promote the Lundeen Bill (H. R. 2827).

The League of Women Shoppers is giving full support to the strikers of the Retail Shoe Salesmen's Union against the National Shoe Stores. The salesmen, most of whom have families, have been made to work unusually long hours at wages as low as $14 a week.

For the first time in the history of the South a representative group of the actual producers of cotton will gather to discuss their problems at the Convention of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. The Convention will be held at Little Rock, Ark., January 3, 4 and 5.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Eliot, Auden, Isherwood and Cummings

MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, by T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace. $1.25.
THE DOG BENEATH THE SKIN, by W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood. Random House. $1.50.
TOM, by E. E. Cummings. Arrow Editions. $3.

T. S. ELIOT has called the historical sense indispensable to any one who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year. Its possession, like others that men spend a lifetime in accumulating, can be either an asset or a liability when the possessors find themselves placed, by time or circumstance, on the border of two worlds. In this situation the radical poet is less subject to embarrassment than the conservative. He is better prepared for the emergency to whose necessity he gives a comprehending consent; the situation both commits him to critical decision and stimulates his critical faculties. He must make up his mind which of the memories and ideas of earlier generations are valid for later ones (he would be a reckless fool if he threw away all his familiar cultural apparatus), and he has no time to dawdle away in enervating *folie de doute*. The conservative, on the other hand, finds that his very respect for tradition has, by the laws of dialectic, engendered a passion for originality. As these equally praiseworthy impulses are intensified, they subject the poet to increasing strain, and the pull of their conflicting forces tends to swing the poet into either stereotype or eccentricity, depending on the peculiar resistance offered by his nature to their attraction. The man who can take his tradition neat or leave it alone has all the advantage.

The genius of T. S. Eliot is neither stereotyped nor eccentric. He must be respected for what he has been, even if we are gravely suspicious of what he is or contemptuous of what he may become. In *Murder in the Cathedral* he has inverted the usual operation of the historical sense and let his awareness of the doleful aspects of modern society inform his understanding of an earlier system in process of break-up. The action of this play occurs on two days, December 2 and December 29 of the year 1170, but we know this atmosphere:

> Here is no continuing city, here is no abiding stay.
> Ill the wind, ill the time, uncertain the profit, certain the danger.
> O late late late, late is the time, late too late, and rotten the year;
> Evil the wind, and bitter the sea, and grey the sky, grey grey grey.
>
> We do not wish anything to happen.
> Seven years we have lived quietly,
> Succeeded in avoiding notice,
> Living and partly living.
> There have been oppression and luxury,
> There have been poverty and license,
> There has been minor injustice,
> Yet we have gone on living,
> Living and partly living.
>
> But now a great fear is upon us, a fear not of one but of many,
> A fear like birth and death, when we see birth and death alone
> In a void apart. We
> Are afraid in a fear which we cannot know, which we cannot face, which none understands,
> And our hearts are torn from us, our brains unskinned like the layers of an onion, our selves are lost lost
> In a final fear which none understands. . . .

And, by substituting terms, we might convert the drama's theological testimony to revolutionary significance; thus the sermon for Christmas Day could become an eulogy of Lenin or the contrast between the worldly prose of the Four Knights of Reaction and the final choral *Te Deum* of praise be construed as an omen of the ultimate triumph of life over death. It would take some doing, to be sure, and might not be worth the trouble, and no doubt would distort the pious purpose of Mr. Eliot, who may, for all that, still be an artist more honest than he prefers to admit. He had it once and he can hardly lose it all at once, no matter what ideas he may think he has in his head.

A brief comment on his method. He is up to his old trick of setting the magnificent against the commonplace, the chorus against the doggerel, ostensibly for ironical effect, and here, as before, is inclined to work the trick for all it is worth. There are some signs that it isn't worth as much as it used to be and its application is not always sure.

Can he write really sustained poetry? Or is this a mannerism which he exaggerates, as his power wanes, to distract from his loss of power, as an aging athlete parades his tricks, husbands his energy and tries to make his errors come when they will do the least damage? Is there not the danger of making things look better than they are, as a star actress augments the impression of her talents by surroundig herself with a retinue of hams? Eliot might be well advised to ask himself some pretty sharp questions about this performance.

Auden, of course, has borrowed particularly from Eliot, whom, like his other numerous creditors, he repays in banter and spoofing. It is nothing unheard of for satirists to pillory the class from which they spring; Auden, however, departs from the satirical tradition by not being a political Tory, and furthermore by writing as if it were fun. His historical sense of literature is keen and strong without being at all academic. In protecting himself against the infection of tradition he has, so to speak, adopted a method of inoculation and, by giving himself a series of deliberate injections, worked up quite an immunity. The result is equally fantastic and amusing. This, with the assistance of his friend Isherwood, he proceeds to demonstrate for us in the three act play entitled *The Dog Beneath the Skin, or Where is Francis?* It is good droll horsing, in allusions they will recognize, of the British upper class; and while there is some evidence of a tendency toward dangerous self-repetition, on the whole the book is an improvement over Auden's earlier work—in clarity over the poems, orations, diaries and charades; and in richness and exuberance over *The Dance of Death.* As in former works by Auden, the play documents the case histories of those pathological specimens "whose own slight gestures tell their doom with a subtlety quite foreign to the stage." But the text is more than horse-play and case-history; elsewhere Auden has made use of a definition of poetry as "memorable speech," and the stuff here has resonance and ring, a good hard sound to it; it bites and takes hold. Auden and Isherwood can not only kid. They can write.

The play's central theme, the search for the lost heir who has run away from his father's house and hidden beneath the skin of the dog, may be interpreted as an allegorical history of the artist in the latter days of imperialist break-up. The lords of empire had always regarded him as something of a son of a bitch, even though, as the military character puts it, "I'm bound to say while he was with me he was the best gun-dog I ever had." The missing heir, confronted with the necessity of accepting the nomination, undertakes to see people from under- and realizes what a shock th-

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consternation, and search for his whereabouts takes his pursuers into all sorts of improbable European purlieus, ranging from the brothels of Ostnia, the lunatic areas of Westland (where The Leader has a loud speaker instead of a face), through the gardens of Paradise Park, "where most wasters and cranks wind up sooner or later" and a romantically erudite poet misquotes the classics, and the crass vulgarity of the Nineveh Hotel until the time comes for the disguise to be superseded by manifesto:

> Since I've been away from you, I've come to understand you better. I don't hate you any more. I see how you fit into the whole scheme. You are significant, but not in the way I used to imagine. You are units in an immense army: most of you will die without ever knowing what your leaders are really fighting for or even that you are fighting at all. Well, I am going to be a unit in the army of the other side. . . .

and to a proclamation of the Vicar's blacklist, the General's curse and official unrecognition from the big-shot press, Francis, the missing heir, Alan, who has been searching for him and several newly-found companions come down from the stage and go out through the audience, while "the gestures and cries on the stage become more incoherent, bestial and fantastic, until at last all are drowned in deafening military chords."

As with Eliot, Auden and Isherwood put the finest poetic and prophetic writing into the choruses, which are by turns ominous or flippant, casual or imperative. The epilogue, ending on the line "To each his need: from each his power" is particularly fine; too long to quote in full, it cannot be divorced from what has gone before nor abbreviated by partial quotation without damaging its integral feeling. Perhaps an idea of the choral quality can be suggested by fragmentary selection from the verses which end Scene Four of Act III:

> So, under the local images your blood has conjured
> We show you man caught in the trap of his terror, destoying himself. . . .
> Do not speak of a change of heart, meaning five hundred a year, and a room of one's own
> As if that were all that is necessary. In these islands alone there are some forty-seven million hearts, each with four chambers. . . .
> Visit from house to house, from country to country: consider the populations
> Beneath the communions and the coiffures: discover your image.
> Man divided always and restless always: afraid and unable to forgive. . . .
> Beware of yourself:
> Have you not heard your own heart whisper 'I am the nicest person in this room'?
> Asking to be introduced to someone real: someone unlike all those people over there? . . .
> You have wonderful hospitals and a few good schools:
> Repent.
> The precision of your instruments and the skill of your designers is unparalleled:
> Unite.
> Your knowledge and your power are capable of infinite extension:
> Act.

Not the least interesting aspect of Auden's career has been his ability to work with others. This is a sign of sound artistic health and Eliot's general commentary on the point is worth repeating: "The second-rate artist, of course, cannot afford to surrender himself to any common action; for his chief task is the assertion of all the trifling differences which are his distinction: only the man who has so much to give that he can forget himself in his work can afford to collaborate, to exchange, to contribute."

Between them, Eliot and Auden have managed to hit off just about what is the matter with E. E. Cummings, whose sickly heart, however brave he was about it, has only too often told him he was the nicest person in the room. There is something pathetic about a man whose disgust with authority forbids him acceptance of any system, whether of politics, punctuation or ideas. Even when Cummings' conceited ingenuity is most exasperating in asserting his pretensions to organized composition, we pity him for the constant embarrassment he must suffer in asking to be introduced to someone real. His own talent is real enough, but it has served only to fool him about himself. The poor fellow. He thinks that in writing *Tom,* a ballet based on *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* he has "fearlessly and completely challenged a partial and cowardly epoch." Actually, what he has done is wasted his time over a book of stage directions, no mean art, as Shakespeare and Shaw have proven, but—they also wrote the plays. Then what abuse of the adverbial parts of speech! It is time his best friend, or some one, should tell Cummings how he offends. For a man who knows much about writing to plop down into this swamp of squirmspurty pseudo-boyish squshiness illustrates—alas!—how a compassionate and generous talent can get itself mired, lacking analysis, in a search for respectable occupation, a principle of allegiance.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

The Chinese Revolution

CHINA'S MILLIONS, by Anna Louise Strong. Introduction by John Cournos. The Knight Publishing Co. $2.50.

WORKERS in Changsha, in April, 1927, when they learned that Chiang Kai-shek had made a deal wtih the Shanghai bankers and had suppressed the Shanghai labor unions, said to Anna Louise Strong, "The revolution is a moving train. At every station some get on and others get off. Chiang Kai-shek got off the train of the revolution."

There can be added to this shrewd comment what the succeeding years have shown, that events let no historical figure rest. When he got off the train of the revolution Chiang Kai-shek did not stand still, but began going backwards. Today, eight years after the triumphs had won him the trust and support of the Chinese masses, eight years after the unification of China seemed to have been achieved and the imperialist powers were giving way before the unity of the Chinese people, Chiang Kai-shek sees his power disintegrating. He sees the revolution re-arisen and gathering in might against him. The Shanghai bankers cannot fight for him; the masses hate him; and the Japanese who have used him against his people now ignore him while they go about adding the northern provinces of China as a new puppet state to looted Manchuria.

The story of the disintegration of the Chinese Nationalist Party since the 1927 betrayal is told in the three chapters with which Anna Louise Strong brings up to date her vivid book on the Chinese National Revolution. These three chapters add much to the value of a book that has well deserved its high reputation. They show with startling incisiveness the consequences of a betrayal of the masses. They show political forces in action more clearly than any like period in recent history. First of all the revolution went on. It was not stopped. It could not be stopped. No fascist reaction was more unscrupulous than the Kuomintang reaction. But the revolution flowed under and around the reaction and gathered greater strength. The Soviet districts in China expand irresistibly. Secondly, political power needs a mass base. Bankers and landlords do not provide it. The Kuomintang grows weaker every day, facing the patient but unforgiving masses who wait their day and know it is coming as the Soviets advance. Thirdly, no imperialist power has ever stepped in to help without staying to help itself. Chiang Kai-shek, when he first accepted Japanese assistance against his own people, prepared for the seizure of Manchuria and for the new puppet state now being put together in Nor China.

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Prerequisites of Growth

AT MADAME BONNARD'S, by Joseph Vogel. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

IN reviewing Grace Lumpkin's fine new book, Erskine Caldwell has noted a tendency of contemporary Left novelists, an unfortunate and irritating tendency, already less in evidence than it was last year but one that has marred even some of the best of their work.

> References are made on several occasions to the clean overalls and shirts of some of the workers, inferences are to be drawn from the remarkably good English of some of them and lessons are given in their chaste moral habits. On the other hand, some individuals among the opposition are depicted as having bad-smelling feet, foul speech and perverted morals. There is truth behind all of these instances, but they are overdrawn, in contrast, to the point of absurdity.

Joseph Vogel is one of the few whose hands are completely clean of this dealing from the bottom because he has a fundamental integrity and a fundamental love for the materials of a novel. He suffers with his people and he would no sooner hurt them in what he conceives to be their artistic completeness than he or you would think of wilfully overturing a baby carriage. When he has an idea about why one of these people acts in a certain way he describes it in sentences that steer clear of adornments outside his range and when he is puzzled or stumped he hazards suggestions, naive perhaps at times, but not with the fashionable, sophisticated primitivism of the Dumbbell School, rather in the truer groping method, if not manner, of the early Sherwood Anderson.

Much as *Jews Without Money* was essentially the work of a poet, *Georgia Nigger* of a reporter, *The Disinherited* of a manual worker, so *At Madame Bonnard's* is a novel by one who has done his best work as a writer of short stories. Its chapters progress in the single-line narrative of most short stories and they are sufficiently complete to stand up by themselves and many of them could be extracted without damage to its structure as a novel. As a result, the situations have little continuity of development and the incidents and people themselves lose the tension necessary to sustain not only our interest in them as individuals but their character as such. Different aspects of Hyman Lavin are shown in the light of different events but these aspects are so unrelated, so lacking in the similar earmarks that stamp the most varied actions of a person, that he doesn't hang together nearly well enough. This is not a plea for the plotty and ostensibly watertight but actually false and adventitious tension created by Hammett or Cain or, at times and on another plane, by Guy de Maupassant. It is a caution against the use of Dos Passos devices, appropriate to the Dos Passos canvas, but harassing on a smaller scale and this, not due to any lack of intrinsic skill in the body of Vogel's writing.

In common with most of his co-workers in the school he has chosen, Vogel seems to have more success in dealing with the minor characters of his book; definitely the approach of the short-story writer, accustomed to illuminating relatively few aspects of a person, a legitimate and inevitable approach to the short story but something of a tour de force, to be used sparingly in a novel. Mrs. Steiner, the servant at Madame Bonnard's boarding house, used to be a lady in the old country and she is bitter about her lot and she says so every time she crops up in the book and that is all you know about Mrs. Steiner.

You take Francoise, another servant and, in the scheme of Proust's novel, a minor character. You know what she looked like at a dozen periods of her life, what she thought of her successive employers and what they thought of her and what she thought of the people who came to visit her employers and what she thought about the shopkeepers she traded with and of the hats worn by the hero's mistress and what she thought about death, illness, immortality, war, restaurant cooking, etymology, literary work, several other servants; people, ideas and objects the mere list of which would stretch the length of a Vogel chapter. Of course, Joseph Vogel is Joseph Vogel, not Marcel Proust, Klementi Voroshilov or the late Marie Dressler. He is trying to write a book about a group of people and Proust and a lot of other writers have done this in certain ways which ought to be helpful in deciding him on the particulars of his own way. No one growing up in the educational

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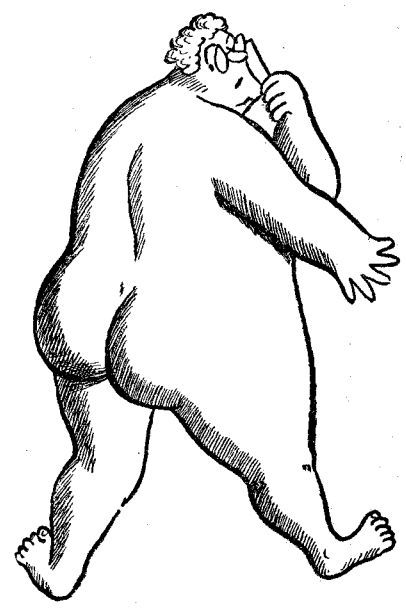

EXPOSED

Mrs. J. Mortimer Potts, familiar figure Newport and the Lido, thought that yel *at butlers, sneering at beggars and ha* sales girls fired was a birthright of the P What was her chagrin when that awfully gaging young man turned out to be Redfiel master menace to "the ruling clawss!"

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of Utica and the boarding houses of York can know as much about as many s of culture, in the narrower sense, as st did. The very fact that his fellow rican proletarian novelists share this ive ignorance to slightly varying degrees rtial proof of this; Bukharin has noted ck of knowledge, similar if springing n different roots, on the part of Soviet s. But Vogel can know as much as anyabout the circumstances and the people is own life, his own culture and he can to make of these his own strong and pictures, without the cork-lined cham- As it is, his people do not have enough orical and psychological density and this ot merely a matter of length of piling on il. There is hardly more linotype lead in rles Bovary than there is in Hyman in but Bovary's attitudes toward his ther, his child, his wife and her father her lover are worked out in relation to another, made to illuminate one another they could never be budged from the ng into which Flaubert has imbedded m. Situations in a novel have to be chosen h different standards and a different disline than those of a short story.

There can be nothing more odious to a pus writer than the commentator who s him around the shoulder and says etty good, boy, pretty good and you'll get er as you go along, anyhow I hope so; mean well." Vogel is much more than well-meaning writer. He knows a lot ut the forces operating in his people and gers to know more. He never fakes. He rks in a collective laboratory where re-s are constantly being checked, approved eliminated. He has command over a vigus and easy flow of words, the protoplasm writing, words in their right place These e the prerequisites of growth.

EDWARD NEWHOUSE.

Sweet Impartiality

PROPHETS AND POETS, by André Maurois. Harper & Brothers. $3.00.

ANDRE MAUROIS, the William Lyon Phelps of French criticism, has fussed together another of his inimitable bouquets of enthusiasms and it has been rushed through in a gold wrapper at three bucks a throw just in time for the Christmas trade. Aunt Agatha, please take notice.

This time the industrious popularizer of culture for the ladies' clubs lets his impartial Gallic eyes rove over the frames of Kipling, Wells, Shaw, Chesterton, Conrad, Strachey, Lawrence, Huxley (Aldous) and Katherine Mansfield. Impartiality is, indeed, the hopeful motif of this effort to flutter through the thought that has supposedly best expressed the heart and growth of this century. Maurois himself would probably be horrified if you thought he favored any one writer's values above another's: he simply regards them all unimpassionedly and records their contents evenly.

This, for example, on Kipling's brazen imperialism is, we suppose, an "impartial" comment: "For many years liberal critics were prevented by political passion from recognizing that the genius in Kipling is something quite independent of political ideas." Wells' pseudo-scientific utopianism and wholesale contempt for the "little man" find Maurois positively dripping with approval. And this near-idiotic comment on Shaw—"though he made short work of Marx's obsolescences in abstract economics, and of his inexperience in practical administration, and laughs at the famous dialectic as a method of thought for British islanders, [Shaw] remains in all essentials a convinced Marxist"—should help finally to dispel any lingering delusions about Maurois' reliability as an "unprejudiced" guide to contemporary literature.

The remaining essays add or subtract absolutely nothing in the existent sum of clichés on the subjects. EMANUEL EISENBERG.

Brief Review

WHO ARE THE ARYANS? by Margaret Schlauch. (Anti-Fascist Literature Committee. 10 cents.) Margaret Schlauch's simple analysis of the terms Aryan and race is useful and refreshing. Race in its scientific meaning is a physiological differentiation of people. The word Aryan is scientifically used to describe not a race but a prehistoric language, from which many modern European languages are derived and a civilization about whose existence and origin there is very little evidence available. Schlauch concisely shows that race purity or superiority is a myth. Its prominence in fascist countries can only be accepted as an attempt to distract and divide the dissatisfied masses. This pamphlet will serve a valuable purpose in halting the spread of the race myth in other countries.

FIG TREE JOHN, by Edwin Corle. (Liveright and Company. $2.) This smoothly-written, sympathetic story of an old and a young Apache Indian and their different attitudes toward white men, makes interesting reading in spite of its narrow and sectional approach.

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Why I Created "Air-City"

ALEXANDER DOVJENKO

Alexander Dovjenko, together with S. M. Eisenstein and V. I. Pudovkin make up the "big three" in the Soviet cinema. His three films, Arsenal, Soil *and* Ivan (*for which he was awarded the Order of Lenin*) *have all been seen here. His new film* Air-City *is soon to be released in this country as* Frontier.—THE EDITORS.

MY TRIP to the Fast East for the purposes of studying this region, its economics, life, people, nature—with a view to creating a scenario for the film—was probably one of the most outstanding events in my life.

Four whole months I traveled with my group all over the country, using all possible means of conveyance. I traveled by railroad; flew over the great Amur in a hydroplane; beyond Nikolaievsk-on-Amur I rode into the Taiga on horseback; from the mouth of the Amur to Vladivostok I took a boat; I visited Sakhalin, went down into the Suchan coal mines, tramped 400 kilometers through the Taiga following partisan tracks, spent New Year's in Komsomolsk.

And it began to seem to me, that my life was spent wrongly, that I should have come here five years ago and never go back to "Russia," as some of the trappers say. And that I am not a director, but a partisan, a trapper, a member of the Tcheka and I should not be making films, but should be rebuilding the country, discovering its riches and guarding our far-away borders against the enemies of the workers.

I found a place for this feeling: "Fifty years of my life were spent in the Taiga—like a day. And every day I look and cannot stop looking, and I ask myself: is there in the world such beauty and such richness? No. There is no such beauty and such richness! And therefore, tell me, young people, who will dare?" (Glushak's speech at the end of the film.)

We met a number of workers of the Far East Commune, beginning with the leaders and ending with inhabitants of the distant settlements—fisheries, forestries, trappers and kolkhozes of the outlying villages. And everywhere I felt one idea—the forceful socialist advance on the natural resources of this young and plentiful region and the assurance of peace on the border.

During the trip it began to be clear to me that here one can make not one film, but a multitude of beautiful films, articles, novels and symphonies. But I had to make one scenario for one film.

So I decided to select from the mass of impressions the most important ones and, having them generalized and united, express them in the form of a work of art.

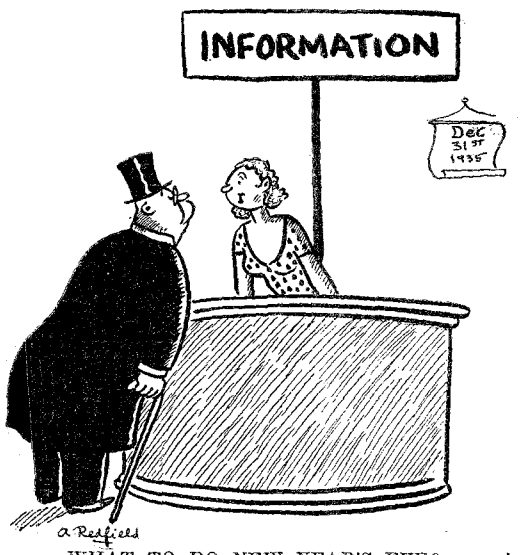
The scenario of the *Air-City* is the result. The idea of *Air-City* was not born as an artful resignation, not as a withdrawal from the many things seen or from the hardships of subjecting the actuality to the art form.

Just the opposite. In my creative and social mind I paid tribute to everything beautiful which I admired in this region of my great country. But I wanted mor that. Studying the country I came conclusion, that our historic future i Far East Commune must not be depen upon the existing economic centers. Pas over the Ural and Kuzbas, over the fu Angrastroy and the greatest coal-mining gion of Biro-Burey, breaking through the Baikal-Amur Road to a new outlet the ocean, we must build another great on the shores of the ocean, a second V vostok. I even found a place to build *City* and I decided that this is correct.

And so I think that *Air-City* is not imaginings of an artist, but a reality of days. And if this city does not exist it does not mean a thing. Occasionall think, what if, while the film was b made, they built a city in the Soviet harb In our country everything is possible. did build Magadan on the Okhotsk sh with miraculous speed and everybody li it and everybody is happy about it.

In this film I did not want to be an lustrator of things done by the Party, government and the workers, I wanted be a pioneer of things to be done.

The poetic underline of the film is a sult of the fact, that life is beautiful, the region is beautiful and that for flags will never wave in this region.



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Between Ourselves

JOSEPH NORTH has left THE NEW MASSES to become editor of The Sunday Worker, which will begin publication on January 12. Associated with North will be James S. Allen and Edwin Seaver, both of whom have appeared frequently in THE NEW MASSES. The Sunday Worker represents the most ambitious effort in the newspaper field that the revolutionary movement here has thus far made. It will consist of twenty-eight pages, including a news section, rotogravure section and magazine section and will sell for five cents.

In next week's issue Robert Forsythe, who has been accused of having an anti-British phobia, has an article in which he defends his position. "What I want to examine in this article," he writes, "is the peculiar position of Great Britain in the world of culture and politics which makes it so completely an enemy not only of sound liberalism but of freedom and culture in general."

John L. Spivak's article next week examines the similarities between the Nazis' racket and that of Al Capone. Spivak managed to be present at a typical Nazi racketeering scene.

Four poems from THE NEW MASSES have been selected for inclusion in *The 1935 Anthology of Magazine Verse,* published by the Poetry Digest Association. They are "I, Jim Rogers," by Stanley Burnshaw; "America, 1918," by John Reed; "Breadwinners," by David Greenhood; and "Close Up This House," by Joseph Bridges.

Simone Tery's article "How Barbusse's *Under Fire* Was Published," will appear in International Literature No. 10.

A number of copies of last week's NEW MASSES contained a printer's error in Jean Simon's article "Which Books for Your Children?" In the list on page 25 the caption "For Younger Children" applies only to the final titles, beginning with *Steam Shovel for Me.*

Isidor Schneider will be the speaker at the next meeting of the Friends of THE NEW MASSES. It will be held at Steinway Hall, 113 West 57th Street, on Thursday, January 2, at 8.30 p. m.

Subscribers are urged to notify us promptly of any change of address. Two weeks must be allowed to make such changes effective. Subscribers who fail to receive copies on time are asked to notify our circulation department, giving their correct address.

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